

Kessler, Ellen

From: Lilley, Bliss
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 10:02 AM
To: Collins, Carly
Subject: FW: CapX2020
Attachments: CapXFactsheet.RightofWay.pdf; EMF_Factsheet3.pdf; RUS direct mail invitation_05 29 2009.pdf

From: Schultz, Dawn R [mailto:dawn.schultz@xcelenergy.com]
Sent: Friday, July 10, 2009 12:39 PM
To: p.heimbecker@peerlesschain.com
Cc: stephanie.strength@usda.gov; Lilley, Bliss
Subject: CapX2020

Dear Mr. Heimbecker,

Thank you for your contact regarding the CapX2020 Hampton - Rochester - La Crosse line. Just for clarification regarding routing, the route we are currently studying in the Winona area could be included on our Route Permit application to the MN Public Utilities Commission (PUC), or we could propose another, or both. (Our routes are still under review.) The PUC could end up choosing one of our routes or their own.

As to how the line would impact Peerless Chain Company, it is too early for us to speculate on that, given the uncertainty of routing. However, I am attaching a handout on easements which may prove useful.

Regarding EMF, I am attaching a handout on that as well. Included in the handout are outside sources that address the numerous studies that have been conducted on this issue. Another source for review would be here: <http://psc.wi.gov/thelibrary/publications/electric/electric12.pdf>

Finally, I am forwarding your concerns to Stephanie Strength with the USDA's Rural Utilities Service. They are currently taking comments for their Environmental Impact Statement. More information on this is also attached. They will continue to take comments until July 25th.

Should you have any further questions now or in the future, please do not hesitate to contact us again.

Dawn Schultz
Technician, Siting & Land Rights - North
Xcel Energy
CapX2020
800-238-7968

Phillip Heimbecker (507) 457-9132 p.heimbecker@peerlesschain.com
1614 E. Sanborn St.
Winona MN 55987

I-257-002 | The proposed route for the line would run behind Peerless Chain Company if Winona, MN is selected for the line crossing into Wisconsin. I would like to know how this would impact the property where Peerless Chain Company sits and what will be done regarding the electromagnetic fields (EMF's) in relation to this project.
I-257-001 | There are approximately 400 employees at Peerless Chain that could feel the effects of this line being installed. Not to mention the business itself.

I-257-001

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human and livestock health and safety with regard to EMF will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Per Ms. Schultz' email, additional sources of information on the subject of EMF are available for your review.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

I-257-002

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to land use will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. As stated by Ms. Schultz in her email response, it is too early in the process to determine impacts at specific locations.

Thank you.
Phillip A. Heimbecker 7/10/2009 12:47:00 PM

CapX2020

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Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency
 Dairyland Power Cooperative
 Great River Energy
 Minnesota Power
 Minnesota Power Cooperative
 Missouri River Energy Services
 Otter Tail Power Company
 Rochester Public Utilities
 Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency
 Wisconsin Public Power Inc.
 Xcel Energy

Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF): the Basics

EMF exists wherever electricity is produced or used. Electric and magnetic fields are invisible lines of force that surround any electrical appliance or wire that is conducting electricity. You're exposed to these fields in your home when you turn on a lamp, e-mail a friend or cook your dinner. In all likelihood, you're surrounded by EMF from machines in your workplace, too.

The electric power we use daily is a 60-Hertz (Hz) alternating current, meaning that electric charges move back and forth 60 times a second. We use 'EMF' in this fact sheet in reference to these 60 Hz fields, called 'extremely low frequency' or 'power frequency' fields, which are distinct from the much higher frequency fields associated with radio and TV waves, X-rays, and cell phone signals. As a matter of fact, currents from 60 Hz EMF are weaker than the natural currents found in the body, such as those from the electrical activity generated by your brain or your heart.

What are electric and magnetic fields?

Electric fields are created by voltage – the higher the voltage, the stronger the field. Anytime an electrical appliance is plugged in, even if it isn't on, an electric field is created. But these fields are easily blocked by walls, trees, and even your clothes and skin, and the farther away you move from the source of the electric field, the weaker it becomes. Moving even a few feet away from an appliance makes a big difference in the strength of the field that you're exposed to. Electric fields are measured in kilovolts (kV).

Magnetic fields, measured in milliGauss (mG), only exist when an electric appliance is turned on – the higher the current, the greater the magnetic field. As with electric fields, the strength of a magnetic field dissipates dramatically as you move away from its source. However, unlike electric fields that are easily blocked, magnetic fields can pass through walls and clothes and other barriers.

Studies on EMF and possible health effects focus on magnetic

fields because they're more difficult to block and because most scientists have concluded that electric fields don't pose health threats.

Why are you calling them electric and magnetic fields instead of electromagnetic fields? Is there a difference?

These terms are often used interchangeably and both electric and magnetic fields and electromagnetic fields are usually abbreviated as EMF. However, technically there is a difference. The frequency fields produced by the generation, transmission and use of electricity – typical of most household and office appliances and power lines – are low and electric and magnetic fields exist separately. At higher frequencies, such as with radio or TV signals or X-rays, the fields are interrelated, and the term 'electromagnetic' more accurately describes these fields.

What are some of the things in my home and at work that produce EMF?

Anything that generates, distributes or uses electricity creates electric and magnetic fields. Below is a list of some appliances and machines commonly found in homes or offices and the magnetic fields they emit.

Typical 60 Hz magnetic field levels from some common home appliances

	Magnetic field 6 inches from appliance (mG)	Magnetic field 2 feet away (mG)
Electric shaver	100	–
Vacuum cleaner	300	10
Electric oven	9	–
Dishwasher	20	4
Microwave oven	200	10
Hair dryer	300	–
Computers	14	2
Fluorescent lights	40	2
Faxogram machines	6	–
Copy machines	90	7
Garbage disposals	80	2

Source: National Institute of Environmental Health Services / National Institutes of Health: EMF Associated with the Use of Electric Power

How can I find out what EMF levels I'm exposed to at home and at work?

You can find out your daily exposure to magnetic fields by wearing a personal exposure meter or by keeping one close to you. This is the most accurate way to measure your true exposure to magnetic fields during the course of your normal activities. Other meters, called gaussmeters, can be put in a location – like your kitchen or home office – to measure typical EMF levels in that spot. This type of measurement isn't an accurate measure of personal exposure, however, because it doesn't take into account your distance from the source of the fields or the amount of time you might spend in that place.

Contact your local electric service provider. Most utilities offer a free measurement service to customers for their homes or businesses.

What are 'typical' residential exposures to magnetic fields?

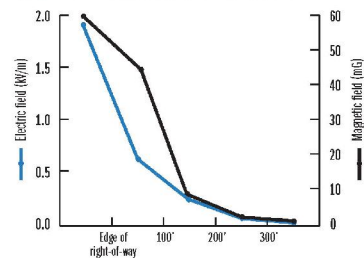
Exposure levels vary from individual to individual and from home to home, but a study by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) puts the background levels of magnetic fields in the typical U.S. home at between 0.5 mG and 4 mG with an average of 0.9 mG. Levels rise the closer you get to the source of the field. Most people are exposed to greater magnetic fields at work than in their homes.

[See the table of magnetic field emissions given off by household and office appliances under **What are some of the things in my home and at work that produce EMF?**]

What EMF levels are found near transmission lines?

All transmission lines produce EMF. The fields are the strongest directly under the lines and drop dramatically the farther away you move. Contact your local utility to find out EMF information about a particular transmission line near you.

Typical EMF levels for a 230-kV transmission line



Source: Western Area Power Administration, *Electric and Magnetic Fields: The Facts*.

Do underground lines reduce EMF emissions?

Because magnetic fields are hard to block, burying power lines won't keep the fields from passing through the ground. Additionally, underground lines can produce higher levels of magnetic fields directly above them at ground level because these lines are located closer to you than overhead lines, although the strength of the magnetic field from underground lines falls away more quickly than from overhead lines.

Underground lines are significantly more expensive to install and more difficult to repair, and since current information provides no conclusive connection between EMF exposure and health effects, burying lines isn't a reasonable alternative.

Are there state or federal standards for EMF exposure?

There are no federal standards limiting residential or occupational EMF exposure. The EMF emissions of appliances vary from

Typical 60 Hz electric and magnetic field levels from overhead power lines

Line voltage	Centerline	Approx. edge of right-of-way	100 feet	200 feet	300 feet
115 kV					
Electric field kV/m	1.0	0.5	0.07	0.01	0.003
Magnetic field mG	30	6.5	1.7	0.4	0.2
230 kV					
Electric field kV/m	2.0	1.5	0.3	0.05	0.01
Magnetic field mG	57.5	19.5	7.1	1.8	0.8
500kV					
Electric field kV/m	7.0	3.0	1.0	0.3	0.1
Magnetic field mG	86.7	29.4	12.6	3.2	1.4

Electric fields from power lines are relatively stable because voltage does not change. Magnetic fields fluctuate greatly as current changes in response to changing loads. The magnetic fields above are calculated for 321 power lines for 1990 mean loads.

Source: National Institute of Environmental Health Services / National Institutes of Health: *EMF Associated with the Use of Electric Power*

manufacturer to manufacturer and model to model. The designs of many newer model appliances, in general, often produce lower fields than older models. There is no federal certification program on EMF emissions so beware of advertisements on appliances making claims of federal government certification of low or no EMF emissions.

Do EMF emissions affect my health?

This issue has been studied for more than 30 years by government and scientific institutions all over the world. The balance of scientific evidence indicates that exposure to EMF does not cause disease. (See Sources and useful links section for more information on studies about EMF and health.)

In 2002 the Minnesota Department of Health released "A White Paper on Electric and Magnetic Field Policy and Mitigation Options." In regard to EMF emissions and health effects, the report states:

"The Minnesota Department of Health concludes that the current body of evidence is insufficient to establish a cause and effect relationship between EMF and adverse health affects." (page 36)

*The entire 2002 report is available at <http://www.capx2020.com/documents.html>.

Does EMF interfere with pacemakers or other medical devices?

EMF can interfere with a pacemaker's ability to sense normal electrical activity in the heart. Most often, the electric circuitry in a pacemaker might detect the interference of an external field and direct the pacemaker to fire in a regular, life-preserving mode. This isn't considered hazardous and is actually a life-preserving default feature. There have been cases with dual-chamber pacemakers triggering inappropriate pacing before the life-preserving mode takes over.

The American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) issued guidelines for EMF exposure for workers with pacemakers or implantable defibrillators. Maximum safe exposure for workers with these medical devices at 60 Hz (the frequency of most transmission lines) is 1 G (1,000 mG) for magnetic fields and 1 kV/m for electric fields.

Nonelectronic metallic implants (artificial limbs, screws, pins, etc.) can be affected by high magnetic fields like those produced by magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) devices, but are generally unaffected by the lower magnetic fields produced by most sources.

How can I reduce my exposure to EMF?

Your exposure to EMF is determined by the strength of the magnetic fields given off by things around you, your distance from the source of the field and how much time you spend in the field.

Creating distance between yourself and the sources of EMF is the easiest way to reduce exposure. Standing back – even an arm's length away – from appliances that are in use is a simple first step. Remember: EMF reduces dramatically with distance. This is more feasible with some appliances than with others, but the following are some simple recommendations that will help you reduce your EMF exposure at home:

- Move motor-driven electric clocks or other electrical devices away from your bed.
- Stand away from an operating microwave or other appliances that use a lot of electricity.
- Sit a few feet away from the TV and at least arm's length away from the computer screen.
- Limit the time you're exposed to a magnetic field by turning appliances, like computer monitors, off when you're not using them.

Sources and useful links

The following are links to more information and studies on EMF:

- *EMF: Electric and Magnetic Fields Associated with the Use of Electric Power, Questions and Answers*, June 2002, prepared by the National Institute of Environmental Health Services (NIEHS), National Institute of Health, www.niehs.nih.gov/emfrapid/booklet/emf2002.pdf. This booklet also includes an extensive list of references on a variety of EMF topics.
- "A White Paper on Electric and Magnetic Field Policy and Mitigation Options," prepared by the Minnesota Interagency Working Group on EMF Issues. www.capx2020.com/documents.html
- *Electric and Magnetic Fields: Facts*, Western Area Power Administration, www.wapa.gov/newsroom/pdf/EMFbook.pdf.
- "Electromagnetic fields: Typical exposure levels at home and in the environment," World Health Organization Fact Sheet, www.who.int/peh-emf/about/WhatsEMF/en/index.html. More general information on EMF can be found at www.who.int/emf.
- NIEHS/Department of Energy EMFRAPID program toll-free public information number to answer EMF-related questions: 800-363-2383.

Contacts

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lacrosseinfo@capx2020.com

Chuck Thompson

Dairyland Power Cooperative

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Minneapolis, MN 55440-9437

608-787-1432

lacrosseinfo@capx2020.com

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Darrin Lahr – Routing Lead

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Jim Musso – Manager, Siting and Land Rights

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Brookings, SD-SE Twin Cities (345-kV)

Project Development Manager: Great River Energy

Craig Poorker – Routing Lead

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Randy Fordice –

Communications Coordinator

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Bemidji-Grand Rapids (230-kV)

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8-30-2007



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Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency
Dairyland Power Cooperative
Great River Energy
Minnesota Power
Minnesota River Cooperative
Missouri River Energy Services
Otter Tail Power Company
Rochester Public Utilities
Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency
Wisconsin Public Power Inc.
Xcel Energy

Understanding Easements and Rights-of-Way

When people talk about building new transmission lines, they often refer to an 'easement' or a 'right-of-way' (ROW). Although the terms often are used interchangeably, they are distinct concepts.

What is an easement?

An easement is a permanent right authorizing a person or party to use the land or property of another for a particular purpose. In this case, a utility acquires certain rights to build and maintain a transmission line. Landowners are paid a fair price for the easement and can continue to use the land for most purposes, although some restrictions are included in the agreement. The easement instrument is the legal document that must be signed by the landowner before the utility can proceed.

What is a right-of-way?

A right-of-way is the actual land area acquired for a specific purpose, such as a transmission line or roadway.

What is the difference between an easement and a right-of-way?

Simply put, an easement is a land right and a right-of-way is the physical land area upon which the facilities (transmission line, roadway, buildings, etc.) are located.

How long does an easement last?

Easements are perpetual and are not subject to termination or expiration. Once an easement is signed, it becomes part of the property record. The utility, the landowner who signed the easement and all future owners of the property are bound by the terms of the easement agreement. The utility can, at some point, choose to release the easement rights if it removes the transmission line and abandons the right-of-way.

How are landowners paid for an easement?

Landowners typically are given a one-time payment based on fair market value for easement rights to their land. Landowners can elect to spread the payment out over time. For instance, landowners can choose to receive installments with interest paid annually on the remaining balance. Traditionally, the easement payment is based on a percentage of the appraised land value. Also, of course, the majority of land still is usable, particularly in agricultural settings where farmers can continue to use the land for raising crops or as pasture.

Landowners also are eligible for reasonable compensation for property damage that may occur when the transmission line is constructed and in the future during repair and maintenance, as described in the easement document.

Who pays property taxes for the right-of-way on which the transmission line is constructed?

The landowner continues to pay property taxes on the right-of-way, although some states, including Minnesota, may provide landowners a property tax credit in proportion to the length of the transmission line that crosses their property.

What easement rights will be needed for the construction of a power line?

The CapX 2020 projects will require easements that allow for surveying, construction, operation and maintenance of a transmission line across a defined right-of-way located on the landowner's property. These easements will include the right to clear, trim and remove vegetation and trees from within the right-of-way, as well as tall and dangerously leaning trees adjacent to the right-of-way that may threaten the line if they fall.

What activities are allowed within the easement area?

Land within the right-of-way may be used for any purpose that does not interfere with the construction, operation or maintenance of the transmission line. In agricultural areas, the land may be used for crop production and pasture. In areas where the land will be developed, streets, lawn extensions, underground utilities, curbs and gutters, etc., may cross the right-of-way with prior written permission from the utility.

Why are there restrictions on the land?

Providing electrical energy is an essential public service, and some restrictions are necessary within the right-of-way to maintain reliability. Utilities have determined that the best way to prevent outages is to restrict the placement of structures within the right-of-way. If a building or structure in the right-of-way caught fire, it could burn into the power line and take the line out of service for an extended time. Additionally, buildings or other structures in the right-of-way can hamper maintenance crews from accessing the line if an outage occurs.

What are the main building and plant restrictions in the easement?

Conditions will vary, but the primary building and planting restrictions within the right-of-way are in place to ensure that a utility has the necessary clearance for operation and maintenance, and to comply with the National Electrical Safety Code. Restrictions within the right-of-way strip prohibit constructing buildings and structures, storing flammable materials and planting tall-growing trees.

Why doesn't the utility just buy the land instead of negotiating an easement?

Utilities' main interest is in simply acquiring the rights to a piece of land in order to build and maintain a transmission line. Owning the land is not required to do this.

Landowners, for the most part, prefer to retain ownership of the property so they can maintain better control over its use within the easement restrictions. Often, retaining ownership allows the landowner continued use of the property for things such as agricultural operations, yard extensions or open space, allowing the property to continue to contribute positively and productively to the owner and the public. Most adjacent uses pose no threat to the line and do not create a public hazard.

Generally, how large is the area covered by an easement or a right-of-way?

The voltage and the type of transmission structure being built determine the size of the right-of-way. For 345-kV lines, the typical right-of-way is up to 150 feet wide.

What happens when the landowner and utility cannot agree on the easement or payment?

If an agreement cannot be reached, a utility may pursue a state-governed process called condemnation, under which a judge and a panel of impartial individuals decide whether the easement is needed and its value. The condemnation process varies from state to state. In general, states establish strict procedures for determining the amount a landowner should be paid by a utility for acquiring a right for construction and maintenance of a transmission line. A government's right to acquire – or authorize the acquisition of – private property for public use, with just compensation being given to the owner, is called eminent domain.

In some states when a transmission line crosses a rural property, a landowner, under certain conditions, may request that the utility purchase the entire property.

* This fact sheet is not a legal document. It is meant to provide general information about easements and rights-of-way. Individual state statutes differ and each utility has its own process.

11-06-2007

INVITATION TO PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS

FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



CAPX2020 HAMPTON-ROCHESTER-LA CROSSE 345-KV TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS WILL BE HELD AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

June 16 6 – 8 p.m. Plainview-Elgin-Millville High School Cafeteria 500 West Broadway Plainview, MN 55964	June 18 6 – 8 p.m. City of St. Charles Community Meeting Room 830 Whitewater Avenue St. Charles, MN 55972	June 24 6 – 8 p.m. Centerville/Town of Trempealeau Community Center W24854 State Road 54/93 Galesville, WI 54630
June 17 6 – 8 p.m. Wanamingo Community Center 401 Main Street Wanamingo, MN 55983	June 23 6 – 8 p.m. La Crescent American Legion 509 North Chestnut La Crescent, MN 55947	June 25 6 – 8 p.m. Cochrane-Fountain City High School S2770 State Road 35 Fountain City, WI 54629

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS), Dairyland Power Cooperative and other CapX2020 utilities invite you to attend a public scoping meeting to discuss the proposed Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission system improvement proposal.

Serving as the lead federal agency, RUS is responsible for completing any requirements with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), including preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Dairyland Power Cooperative is requesting RUS provide financing for its portion of the proposed project. The public scoping meetings provide an opportunity for you to discuss project details with agency and company representatives and for your comments to be incorporated into the planning process and development of an EIS.

RUS will use input provided by government agencies, private organizations and the public in the preparation of the Draft EIS, which will be available for review and comments for 45 days. A Final EIS that considers all comments received will subsequently be prepared.

PROPOSAL

The CapX2020 utilities are proposing to construct a 345 kilovolt (kV) electric transmission line and associated facilities between Hampton and Rochester, Minnesota, and the La Crosse, Wisconsin area. The proposal includes the proposed 345 kV transmission line from a substation near Hampton to a proposed substation in north Rochester and to a new or existing substation near La Crosse. The proposal also includes construction of a new 161-kV transmission line and associated facilities in the Rochester area. (Detailed project map on back.)

The proposed facilities are needed to improve regional reliability, enhance local load serving needs and provide generation outlet support. CapX2020 is a joint initiative of 11 electric transmission-owning utilities in Minnesota, Wisconsin and the surrounding region to expand the electric transmission grid to meet the increasing demand for power.

Xcel Energy is the lead utility for the proposal. Dairyland Power Corporation has requested financial assistance from RUS for Dairyland's anticipated 11 percent ownership interest in the proposal. Other anticipated owners of the proposed facilities include WPPI Energy, Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency, and Rochester Public Utilities. Before the proposal can be built, the CapX2020 utilities must obtain approval from state and federal agencies. Proposal approval also involves NEPA processes and the NEPA implementation guidance of RUS.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY & REQUESTS

Two documents have been prepared for the proposal and are available for review prior to the agency and public scoping meetings in June 2009. The Alternative Evaluation Study (AES) explains the proposal's need, discusses the alternative methods that have been considered to meet that need, and which alternative is considered the best for fulfilling the need. The Macro Corridor Study (MCS) defines the proposal study area and shows the proposal's end points. Within the proposal study area, macro-corridors have been developed based on environmental, engineering, economic, land use and permitting constraints. Both documents are available at the libraries detailed in the attached list. If you are interested in receiving copies of either of these documents, please contact Stephanie.strength@usda.gov or (202) 720-0468.

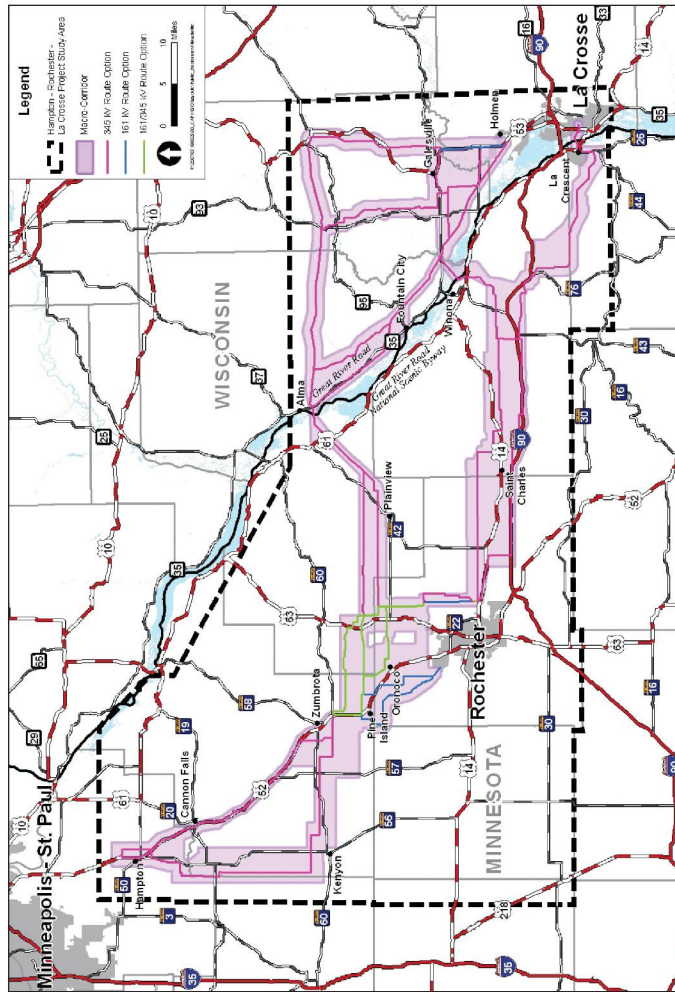
For more information, please contact:

Stephanie Strength, Environmental Protection Specialist
United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service
Engineering and Environmental Staff
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Stop 1571
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Phone: (202) 720-0468
Email: stephanie.strength@usda.gov

Or, contact Tom Hillstrom or Chuck Thompson at
lacrosseinfo@capx2020.com or 1-800-238-7968 or visit
www.capx2020.com for additional project information and
detailed project maps.



Detailed project map on back.



Kessler, Ellen

From: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 3:13 PM
To: Lilley, Bliss
Cc: Collins, Carly
Subject: FW: capX2020 powerline
Attachments: 08-1474 FINAL EIS SCOPE (Text).pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

From: Scott.Ek@state.mn.us [mailto:Scott.Ek@state.mn.us]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 3:08 PM
To: buzzoff2250@aol.com; Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC
Subject: RE: capX2020 powerline

Dear Katie,

Thank you for your letter.

The Minnesota Office of Energy Security is beginning to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement or EIS for the project in which you are referring to. An EIS is a document that addresses and analyzes human and environmental issues associated with certain types of construction projects, with this transmission line project being one of them. I have attached the text of the scoping decision for this particular EIS that lists the topics we will be studying in reference to the transmission project. There is also more information about the state review process online at: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/TransmissionLines.html> and <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?id=19860>.

We will take a look at the items you are concerned about such as electric and magnetic fields, stray voltage, air quality, proximity to homes/businesses, land use compatibility such as agriculture, property values, and transportation/airports just to name a few. The review process is still in the very early stages. Once the EIS is completed and issued around October 2009, you will be able to see what potential impacts were found to be associated with a particular route segment. In general, if there are many impacts to be found with a route segment we would likely look for a comparable route with less impacts.

In October/November 2009 there will be an opportunity to attend public meetings and submit comments on what is contained in the EIS and about the project. That would be the time to submit your comments should you have concerns after reading the EIS. We will then address all the comments in what is called a final EIS and then all the information is delivered to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for a determination on the route and route permit around January 2010.

So I will do my best to make sure that we take a hard and inclusive look at all the issues with regards to every route alternative and ensure the information provides a clear record for the Public Utilities Commission when making a final route permit decision.

I would suggest that you ask your parents to email me their mailing information so that I may add your name to our mailing list. This will ensure that you receive any notices or information that we send out about the project as the process moves along.

Again, thank you for the letter and I appreciate your input. Please feel free to contact me at any time to ask questions or find out where we are at in the review process.

Sincerely,

SCOTT EK

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From: buzzoff2250@aol.com [mailto:buzzoff2250@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 1:30 PM
To: Scott.Ek@state.mn.us; stephanie.strength@usda.gov
Subject: capX2020 powerline

I-258-001

I-258-004

I-258-002

I-258-003

There are many reasons I don't want the huge dangerous power line polls. My first reason is because the radio active waves coming off of these polls can be very dangerous, they can cause many health and environmental issues. I don't want my children when I am older to have cansor or some mental,or physical issues also don't want the polls because it will pollute the air, my family moved out here for many reasons, one of the reasons is to get away from the polluted air. I noticed that the are a lot of farms around us the polls can affect those animals causing the farmers to not be able to sell there protectcs, causing them not to make there income, putting the on well fair,all ending up to the state to pay more money. I also don't like this idea because my family bought this land for money,collage,and fucher plans, if you pot that on our land or near our land we are getting cut out of our money, then all we can use for our land is growing corn which is again cutting our money, because no ones going to want to build or buy land by that huge, bad, polluting, power poll. If your going to put those polls any where go put them by the high way where no one lives by, please .Thanks for reading this.

This letter was rotten by Katie,

This letter is from the kids of my

Family,

Age:21

Age:18

Age:15

Age:14

Age:12

Age:12

Josh

Zach

Danny

Lizzy

Cory

Katie

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. [See yours in just 2 easy steps!](#)

I-258-001

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human and livestock health and safety will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

I-258-002

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to social and economic resources will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

I-258-003

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to social and economic resources will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

I-258-004

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to air quality will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.



**In the Matter of the Route Permit
Application for a 345 kV Transmission
Line from Brookings County, South
Dakota to Hampton, Minnesota.**

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SCOPING DECISION DOCUMENT
PUC Docket No. ET2/TL-08-1474**

The above matter has come before the Director of the Office of Energy Security (OES) for a decision on the Scope of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be prepared on the Great River Energy and Xcel Energy (applicants) route permit application before the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for a proposed transmission line between Brookings County, South Dakota, and Hampton, Minnesota, under the full permitting process (Minnesota Rules 7849.5200 to 7849.5340).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicants propose to construct and operate a 345 kilovolt (kV) transmission line, approximately 237 miles long, beginning at the state's western border near Hendricks, Minnesota, and ending south of the Twin Cities metro area near Hampton, Minnesota. The applicants have proposed two possible routes for the transmission line, a preferred route and an alternate route. These routes would cross portions of the following counties: Lincoln, Lyon, Yellow Medicine, Chippewa, Redwood, Brown, Renville, Sibley, Le Sueur, Scott, Rice, and Dakota. The project would also include the construction of four new substations and the expansion of four existing substations. New substations include the Hazel Creek substation near Granite Falls, the Helena substation near New Prague, the Cedar Mountain substation near Franklin, and the Hampton substation near Hampton (Figures 1 to 5).

The applicants are requesting a 1,000 foot wide route width for the majority of the proposed project. The maximum route width of 1.25 miles is requested for the areas where new substations are proposed and a number of other locations along the route to facilitate system interconnection and address river crossing areas and/or environmental and land use concerns.

The applicants propose using single-structure steel poles which would require a 150-foot right-of-way. A 100-foot right-of-way would be required for the route segment connecting to the Cedar Mountain substation near Franklin, Minnesota. There may also be some limited situations along the route where specialty structures (H-frames or triple circuit structures) may be required. A right-of-way up to 180 feet in width would be required in these instances.

Proposed construction of the transmission line would begin in 2011 with completion by 2013.

PROJECT PURPOSE

As indicated by the applicants in the route permit application, the project has been designed to improve the reliability of the bulk electric system serving Minnesota and portions of neighboring states and would also serve to meet infrastructure additions that have been deemed needed to meet the forecasted growth in demand of several thousand megawatts over the course of the next decade.

The applicants also indicate the project would enhance customer service capabilities in western Minnesota and the southern suburbs of the Twin Cities. Moreover, the project would provide renewable resource generation outlet capability of approximately 700 megawatts from the Buffalo Ridge area in southwest Minnesota. Detailed information regarding the purpose and need for this transmission project is provided in the May 22, 2009, Order issued by the Commission granting Certificates of Need for the CapX 345 kV Transmission Projects, Docket No. ET-2, E-002, et al./CN-06-1115 (<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/edockets/searchDocuments.do?method=showDocketsSearch&showDocket=true>).

REGULATORY BACKGROUND

The applicants filed a route permit application on December 29, 2008, under the full permitting process of the Power Plant Siting Act (Minnesota Statute 216B). The application was accepted as complete by the Commission on January 29, 2009. Under the full permitting process the Commission has one year from the date the application was accepted as complete to make a decision on the route permit.

SCOPING PROCESS

Route permit applications for high voltage transmission lines are subject to environmental review in accordance with Minnesota Rules 7849.5200 to 7849.5340 (full permitting process). Scoping is the first step in the permitting process after application acceptance. The scoping process has two primary purposes, to ensure that the public has a chance to participate in determining what routes and issues to study in the EIS, and to help focus the EIS on the most important issues surrounding the route permit decision.

OES staff collected and reviewed comments on the scope of the EIS by convening two advisory task forces, holding public scoping meetings throughout the proposed project area, and accepting written comments from March 30, 2009, through April 30, 2009. This scope identifies potential human/environmental issues and project route or substation site alternatives that will be addressed in the EIS. The scope also presents a tentative schedule of the environmental review process.

Advisory Task Forces

Two geographically-based advisory task forces (ATFs) were established by the OES, the Lake Marion to Hampton ATF and the Minnesota River Crossings to New Prague ATF. The ATFs were each charged with: (1) identifying local site or route specific impacts and issues of local concern, and (2) identifying alternative transmission line routes or substation locations in their respective area of concern that may maximize positive impacts and minimize or avoid negative impacts of the project. The task forces each met three times between March and April 2009. The recommendations of the ATFs have been considered during the preparation of this scope and can be found in their respective reports. The ATF reports are available at <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?id=19860>.

Public Scoping Meetings

Twelve public information meetings were conducted by the OES between March 30 to April 9, 2009, at nine different locations that included the cities of Marshall, Hendricks, Granite Falls, Redwood Falls, Gaylord, Henderson, New Prague, Lakeville, and Cannon Falls. Approximately 1,065 people attended the twelve public meetings, according to the meeting sign-in sheets. The scoping meetings provided the public an opportunity to learn about the proposed project and the route permitting process, review the route permit application, and ask questions and submit comments. A court reporter was present at each of the public meetings and transcribed questions asked and comments made by the public as well as responses from the OES and the applicants.

Public Comments

A public comment period beginning the day of the first public scoping meeting and ending on April 30, 2009, provided the public an additional opportunity to submit comments and alternative routes to be considered for the scope of the EIS. A total of 999 comments were received by the close of the comment period which included 801 written or emailed comments and 198 oral comments from the public scoping meetings. There was also approximately 827 form letter/postcards from the Watt Munisotaram Temple indicating opposition to the line near their Temple.

All of the written and oral comments submitted at the scoping meetings along with comments received by mail and email were reviewed and entered into a database. Each comment was evaluated for issues or concerns that should be considered for detailed evaluation in the EIS and were classified based on the major topics of the comments. Table 1 below summarizes the major issues raised in these comments, as well as the relative frequency the issue was raised.

Table 1. Major Issues Raised During Public Scoping Period

Issue	Number of Times Issue Mentioned	Percentage of Major Issues
Health/EMF	428	43%
Property Value/Compensation	369	37%
Specific Route Selection (Suggested Alternatives)	297	30%
Proximity to Homes	294	29%
Other*	228	23%
General Route Selection (Support or Non-Support of Proposed Routes)	174	17%
Rare or Unique Species	138	14%
Aesthetics	133	13%
Stray Voltage	83	8%
Trees/Wind Breaks	45	5%
TV/Radio/GPS	41	4%
Noise	37	4%

*Other included issues related to: data in route permit application, general opposition to the project, project need, and easement negotiation process, among others.

The public suggested over 297 route alternatives to the applicants' proposed routes through comment. Of the 297 route alternative suggestions, 197 of them were comments expressing opposition or preference for the applicants' preferred route, alternative route, or no project at all. This left 100 remaining route alternatives that were divided into those that fell within the applicants' requested route width and those that fell outside the requested route width. After further refinement and removal of missed duplicates, 26 alternatives fell within the requested route width and were categorized as alignment alternatives (an "alignment alternative" in this case means a suggested change in the applicants' proposed transmission centerline, such as a shift from one side of a roadway to the other, but where the line would still be located within the original route width) and 74 alternatives fell outside the requested route width and were categorized as route alternatives. Alternative routes recommended by the ATF's were also included in this review.

The task force meeting reports and scoping meeting comment reports, as well as each individual comment (letter or email) are available on the project website maintained by the Commission at:
<http://energy/facilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?id=19860>.

MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED

Having reviewed the matter, consulted with OES Energy Facility Permitting staff, and in accordance with Minnesota Rule 7849.5300, I hereby make the following Scoping Decision.

The applicants' route permit application describes their route analysis and contains the information required by Minnesota Rule 7894.5220, subp. 2, as determined by the Commission. The EIS will summarize the process the applicants' used to identify, evaluate, and select the routes. The EIS will also verify and supplement information provided in the route permit application and will incorporate the information by reference as appropriate.

The EIS on the proposed Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line project will address and provide information on the following matters:

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Project Description
- B. Purpose of the Transmission Line
- C. Project Location
- D. Route Description
- E. Route Width
- F. Rights-of-Way
- G. Project Cost

II. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- A. Certificate of Need
- B. Route Permit
- C. Environmental Review Process

III. ENGINEERING AND OPERATION DESIGN

- A. Transmission Line Conductors
- B. Transmission Line Structures
- C. Substations

IV. CONSTRUCTION

- A. Transmission Line and Structures
- B. Substations
- C. Property/Right-of-Way Acquisition
- D. Cleanup and Restoration
- E. Damage Compensation
- F. Maintenance
- G. Underground Options

V. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT, POTENTIAL IMPACTS, AND MITIGATIVE MEASURES

The EIS will include a discussion of the human and environmental resources potentially impacted by the project and its alternatives. Potential impacts, both positive and negative, of the proposed project and each alternative considered will be described. Based on the impacts identified, the EIS will describe mitigative measures that could reasonably be implemented to reduce or eliminate the identified impacts.

- A. Environmental Setting
- B. Socioeconomic Setting
- C. Human Settlement
 - 1. Noise
 - 2. Aesthetics
 - 3. Proximity to Structures
 - a. Homes and Farmsteads (including farming related structures such as silos, grain bins, etc.)
 - b. Businesses
 - c. Schools/Daycares
 - d. Hospitals
 - e. Cemeteries
 - 4. Displacement
 - 5. Tree Groves/Windbreaks
 - 6. Existing Utilities (pipelines, propane tanks, septic systems)
 - 7. Domestic Water Well Installation/Maintenance
- D. Public Health and Safety
 - 1. Electric and Magnetic Fields
 - 2. Implantable Medical Devices
 - 3. Stray Voltage
 - 4. Explosives/Fireworks
- E. Recreation
 - 1. Parks (city, county, state, and federal)
 - 2. Golf Courses
 - 3. Trails
- F. Transportation and Public Services
 - 1. Emergency Services
 - 2. Airports
 - 3. Highways and Roads (including scenic highways/byways and rest stops)

- G. Interference
 - 1. Radio and Television (digital and satellite)
 - 2. Internet
 - 3. Cellular Phone
 - 4. GPS-Based Agriculture Navigation Systems
- H. Archaeological and Historic Resources
- I. Zoning and Compatibility/Federal, State and Local Government Planning
- J. Land-Based Economies
 - 1. Agriculture
 - a. Prime Farmland
 - b. Organic Farms
 - c. Livestock
 - d. Aerial Crop Spraying/Dusting
 - e. Bee Keeping/Bee Colonies
 - 2. Forestry
 - 3. Mining
- K. Property Values
 - 1. Residential
 - 2. Industrial
 - 3. Agriculture
- L. Air Quality (As it pertains specifically to this transmission line project only.)
- M. Natural Resources
 - 1. Surface Water
 - a. Lakes
 - b. Surface Flows
 - 2. Groundwater
 - 3. Wetlands
 - 4. Floodplains
 - 5. State Wildlife Management Areas/Scientific Natural Areas
 - 6. National Wildlife Refuge/Waterfowl Production Areas
 - 7. Forests
- N. Flora
- O. Fauna
- P. Rare and Unique Natural Resources/Critical Habitat

VI. ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO BE EVALUATED IN EIS

The EIS will identify and evaluate alternative routes and route segments to the proposed project. Nine of the 21 ATF identified routes and 38 of the 71 alternative routes suggest through public comment will be evaluated in the EIS and are presented below and illustrated in Figures 6 to 16.

Brown County

P-BRN-001 (Prah) – Approximately 0.5 miles south of 280th Street on Terrance Avenue head east cross-country approximately 1 mile to 330th Avenue. Head north along 330th approximately 0.25 miles and go east cross-country 0.25 miles and then north 0.25 miles connecting with the preferred route. This alternative is intended to maximize the distance between existing homes and the transmission line.

P-BRN-002 (Prahl) – Approximately 0.5 miles south of 280th Street on Terrance Avenue head east cross-country to 325th Avenue and proceed north connecting with the preferred route. This alternative is intended to maximize the distance between existing homes and the transmission line and is a variation of P-BRN-001.

P-BRN-003 (Prahl) – Approximately 0.5 miles south of 280th Street on Terrance Avenue head east cross-country to 320th Avenue and proceed north following along 320th to where it forks and proceed north cross-country 0.5 miles north then 0.25 miles west to 420th Street connecting with the preferred route. This alternative is intended to maximize the distance between existing homes and the transmission line.

P-BRN-004 (Prahl) – Approximately 0.5 miles south of 330th Street on Terrance Avenue head east cross-country to 330th Avenue and follow 330th Avenue north for approximately 1 mile and turn east cross-country to 325th Avenue. Follow 325th Avenue north where it connects with the preferred route. This alternative is intended to maximize the distance between existing homes and the transmission line and is a variation of P-BRN-001 and P-BRN-002.

P-BRN-005 (Prahl) – Approximately 0.5 miles south of 330th Street on Terrance Avenue head east cross-country to 330th Avenue and follow 330th Avenue north for approximately 1.25 miles then go east cross-country 0.25 miles and then north 0.25 miles connecting with the preferred route. This alternative is intended to maximize the distance between existing homes and the transmission line and is a variation of P-BRN-001, P-BRN-002, and P-BRN-004.

Dakota County

P-DAK-002 (Kaufenberg) – Follow Interstate 35 north from where the preferred and alternative routes meet, crossing Interstate 35 east to 215th Street West. Proceed east along 215th Street to Hamburg Avenue and follow it north to Lakeville Boulevard. Proceed east on Lakeville Boulevard then south on Denmark Avenue to 225th Street West where it would head southeast cross-country 0.5 miles and then north-northwest 0.3 miles connecting with the preferred route. This alternative seeks to avoid existing residences on 240th Street West and reduce the amount of cross-country route.

P-DAK-004 (Rother) – Approximately 0.5 miles west of U.S. Highway 52 (Coates Boulevard) the route would head north cross-country approximately 0.25 miles then turn east for 0.5 miles to Coates Boulevard. This alternative was suggested to avoid bisecting agricultural land and instead follow property/section lines.

P-DAK-005 (Multiple) – Approximately 0.5 miles east of Blaine Avenue the route would turn north from 220th Street cross-country for approximately 0.5 miles then east 0.5 miles to Blaine Avenue. Proceed north along Blaine Avenue approximately 0.2 miles and head east cross-country for approximately 2 miles to 215th Street East and on to Coates Boulevard. This alternative seeks to avoid the Hampton Woods area, the Watt Munisotaram Buddhist Temple and residences along 220th Street East.

P-DAK-006 (Multiple) - Interstate 35 north from where the preferred and alternative routes meet, crossing Interstate 35 east to 215th Street West. Proceed east along 215th Street to Flagstaff Avenue. The route would continue east cross-country approximately 1 mile then turn south 1.5 miles, briefly running along Essex Avenue eventually turning east for 1.2 miles connecting with the preferred route. This alternative seeks to avoid existing residences on 240th Street West and reduce the amount of cross-country route.

P-DAK-007 (Mertens) - From the alternative route at Interstate 35 and 57th Street West head east cross-country approximately 3 miles to 307th Street West. Continue along 307th Street to Eveleth Avenue and east cross-country approximately 1 mile and northeast following along an existing rail line and 69 kV transmission line for approximately 7 miles to 240th Street West connecting with the preferred route. This alternative utilizes an existing 69 kV right-of-way and railroad, may impact fewer homes, and may be a more direct and shorter route.

P-DAK-009 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATF [NW Alt 2]) - From preferred route follow Pillsbury Avenue north to 215th Street West. Head east along 215th Street to Cedar Avenue and continue east cross-country for approximately 0.5 miles then southeast 1.8 miles and again east approximately 1 mile to 220th Street West. Proceed down 220th Street to Denmark Avenue and head south along Denmark veering southeast cross-country at 225th Street West connecting with the preferred route. This alternative is a variation of P-DAK-006 which also seeks to avoid existing residences on 240th Street West and reduce the amount of cross-country route.

P-DAK-010 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATF [Buddhist Temple]) - Approximately 0.5 miles east of Blaine Avenue the route would turn north from 220th Street cross-country for approximately 0.5 miles then east 0.5 miles to Blaine Avenue and continue east cross-country for approximately 2 miles to 215th Street East and on to U.S. Highway 52 (Coates Boulevard). This alternative is a variation of P-DAK-005 and also seeks to avoid the Hampton Woods area, the Watt Munisotaram Buddhist Temple and residences along 220th Street East.

A-DAK-002 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATF [NE Alt 3 “right-angle” and NW Alt 1C]) - From Northfield Boulevard east along County Highway (CH) 86 (280th Street East) then north on Fischer Avenue to U.S. Highway 52. Route continues north cross-country terminating just north of Northfield Boulevard. This alternative seeks to avoid the city of Hampton and reduce number of potentially impacted homes.

A-DAK-003 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATF [NE Alt 3 “diagonal”]) - Travel east from alternate route at Hampton Boulevard/240th Street East to U.S. Highway 52. Head north on U.S. Highway 52 to CH 47 (Northfield Boulevard) continuing northeast along CH 47 approximately 0.75 miles and terminating. This alternative seeks to avoid the city of Hampton and reduce number of potentially impacted homes.

A-DAK-004 (Gerber) - From just north of Lewiston Boulevard head northeast cross-country 240th Street East. Head north from 240th Street East cross-country to CH 47 (Northfield Boulevard). This alternative seeks to avoid the city of Hampton.

A-DAK-005 (Kaufenberg) – From Interstate 35 head east along 280th Street E/W connecting with alternative route at CH 47 (Northfield Boulevard). This alternative may utilize more existing roads and reduce approximately 6 miles of cross-country route bisecting agricultural land.

Le Sueur County

P-LCS-002 (Binczik) - From 320th Street proceed north along 241st to Street 302nd Street and turn east following 302nd to CH 32 and connecting with the preferred route. This alternative seeks to reduce transmission line proliferation in the area (other lines exist) and would follow along existing roads.

A-LFS-001 (Schmidt) Connect with alternative route approximately 0.5 miles north of 310th Street and proceed east cross-country to Le Sueur Avenue. Follow Le Sueur Avenue south to 70th Street West connecting with the alternative route. This alternative may reduce the impacts to homes within 300 feet of the transmission centerline from 6 homes to 1 home.

A-LFS-002 (Hoy) – Follow 210th Street north from the intersection of 300th Street and 210th Street. At approximately 0.75 miles turn east cross-country for approximately 0.75 miles and turn southeast connecting with alternative at 300th Street. The alternative seeks to avoid residence/daycare on 300th Street.

B-LFS-001 (ATF – Henderson [NE Alt 2]) - From preferred route head north along 265th Avenue, west on CH 28, north on 271st Avenue to West 280th Street. Proceed east on 280th to German Road and head north on German Road for approximately 1 mile then continuing cross-country 1.3 miles reconnecting with German Road and ultimately the alternative route. This alternative appears to utilize more existing right-way and seeks to avoid existing residences, and an airfield.

B-LFS-002 (ATF – Henderson [NE Alt 5]) From the alternative route on CH 28 near Township Highway 30 head northeast following along existing 345 kV transmission line to West 270th Street connecting with the preferred route. This alternative may reduce transmission line proliferation by utilizing an existing 345 kV transmission line right-of-way.

B-LFS-005 (Meyer) From the preferred route follow U.S. Highway 169 northeast from just south of Dobby Lane to German Road connecting with the alternative route. This alternative seeks to utilize U.S. Highway 169 as a route connecting the preferred to the alternative reducing some of the need for new right-of-way and impacts to homes.

B-LFS-006 (Multiple) - From the preferred route on 320th Street head north on 265th Avenue for 1 mile to CH 28. Head west on CH 28, north on 271st Avenue, east on West 280th Street, and north on German Road ultimately connecting to the alternate route. A variation of B-LFS-001, B-LFS-003, and B-LFS-004.

B-LES-007 (Davis) - Follow preferred route from river crossing to CH 32 and head north to County Road (CR) 157. Proceed east on CR 157 and north on CR 121 connecting with alternate route. Proposed by the Scott County Board. This alternative may avoid conflicts with the preferred route along CH 2 as identified in the Scott County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update, such as future public right-of-way expansion.

B-LES-008 (ATF Henderson [NE Alt 4]) From the preferred at 221st Avenue head east along CH 28 to 141st Avenue connecting with the alternative route. This alternative follows a county road/established right-of-way and may avoid impacts to dairy farms, day cares, and wetlands, and may also reduce the amount of route that goes cross-country.

B-LES-009 (Anonymous) – From preferred route follow CH 32 (Hickory Boulevard) north to approximately 0.5 miles north of West 280th Street and continue north cross-country to West 260th Street. Turn east continuing cross-country for approximately 4 miles connecting with the preferred route at West 260th Street. This alternative seeks to reduce potential impacts to homes and avoid a pyrotechnics plant.

B-LES-011 (Anonymous) – Approximately 0.25 miles north of 302nd Street head east cross-country from CH 32 for approximately 1 mile connecting with the alternative route at 300th Street. Follow 300th Street to 181st Avenue and turn north following 181st north connecting with the preferred at West 260th Street. This alternative may follow more existing roads than the segment it is meant to replace.

Lincoln County

P-LNC-001 (Sterzinger) - From CR 134 go north on CH 8. Then east cross-country to 340th Street continue east cross-country to Lyon Lincoln Road. This alternative appears to follow more existing roads and would impact a similar number of homes when compared to the segment it is meant to replace.

Lyon County

P-LYN-001 (Grandview Township) - From 330th proceed north along CR 8. At 340th Street head east cross-country for approximately 1 mile to 340th Street following 340th to Lyon Lincoln Road and continue east cross-country connecting to the preferred route at 340th Street. This alternative seeks to reduce potential impacts to homes.

A-LYN-001 (Prins) From alternative route proceed south on CH 9 to 240th Street. Head east on 240th Street to 310th Avenue and head north on 310th connecting with the alternative route. This alternative avoids bisecting agriculture property and appears to follow an existing road.

A-LYN-002 (Maeyaert) – Head north on 170th Avenue from the intersection of 260th Street and 170th. Continue on 170th Avenue to CH 19. Proceed east on CH 19 for approximately 3.5 miles turning south cross-country for approximately 1.5 miles then east for approximately 1.25 miles and east-southeast approximately 0.75 miles crossing CH 23, finally turning south and connecting with the alternative route. This alternative appears to follow section lines where the alternative does not and provides an alternative Redwood River crossing and avoids a golf course and residential area. This alternative segment was originally looked at by the applicants.

A-LYN-003 (City of Lynd) – Same as Alternative A-LYN-002 except after crossing CH 23 the route would continue in an east-southeast direction to 320th Avenue and follow 320th south connecting with the alternative route. The alternative may avoid new future residential developments north of the city of Lind, and encroachment of Savannah Oaks Golf Course. The alternate is also outside Lind city limits and may avoid disturbing a heavily wooded area near the Redwood River.

B-LYN-001 (Multiple) – From the preferred route follow State Highway 23 north. This alternative may minimize impacts to agriculture land, potentially impact fewer homes, and would follow existing State Highway 23 to Granite Falls.

Redwood County

P-RDW-001 (Zwaschka) – From 290th Street at Crown Avenue head south cross-country to State Highway 19. Proceed east along State Highway 19 connecting with the preferred route at Dayton Avenue. This alternative seeks to avoid residences.

A-RDW-001 (Prins) – Route would turn east from CH 7 approximately ¼ mile north of 350th Street and head cross-country for approximately 0.5 miles and turn north connecting with the alternative route. This alternative may avoid bisecting agricultural property owned by one entity by moving to a shared property line.

Renville County

P-RVL-001 (Multiple) – From the preferred route at 420th Street follow 640th Avenue east (road changes to 300th Street) continue east to 571st Avenue connecting with the preferred route. This alternative was initially evaluated by the applicants and may reduce the length of the route by approximately 4 miles impacting a similar amount of homes as the segment it is meant to replace.

P-RVL-003 (Hoffbeck) – From 420th Street follow State Highway 19 east to 460th Street where the route would head north cross-country to 660th Avenue connecting with the preferred route. The alternative seeks to reduce transmission line proliferation in the area (other lines exist) and appears to follow along existing roads and railroad.

Rice County

A-RIC-001 (Lake Marion to Hampton - ATE [NE Alt 2]) - From alternative route at 141st Avenue continue cross-country approximately 1.5 miles to Leaf Trail. Follow Leaf Trail southeast to 60th Street West. Take 60th east to CH 19 connecting to the alternative route. This alternative may reduce impacts to homes and avoid future growth of the city of Lonsdale.

A-RIC-003 (Streck) - From 57th Street West continue north along Elmore Avenue to 50th Street West. At 50th Street turn east cross-country to Interstate 35 connecting with the alternative route. This alternative is intended to avoid homes along 57th Street West.

Scott County

P-SCT-001 (Zweber) - From the preferred route at Jonquil Avenue follow East 250th Street east to Texas Avenue. Follow Texas Avenue north connecting with the preferred route. This alternative may avoid bisecting agricultural land and follow existing roads in its entirety.

P-SCT-002 (Multiple) - From West 270th Street and Aberdeen Avenue head east cross-country approximately 1 mile to Delmar Avenue and proceed north along Delmar to West 260th Street connecting with the preferred route. This alternative may reduce potential impacts to homes on Aberdeen Avenue and West 260th Street.

P-SCT-003 (Lake Marion to Hampton - ATE [NW Alt 3]) - From the preferred route at 245th Street East and Pillsbury Avenue head east along 245th Avenue to Dodd Boulevard connecting with the preferred route. This alternative may impact fewer homes, appears to follow existing roads, reduce cross-country routing, and may be shorter and more direct than the segment it is meant to replace.

P-SCT-007 (Johnson) - From the preferred route at Jonquil Ave and East 260th Street head east along 260th (CH 2) through Elko New Market to Interstate 35. This alternative would utilize an existing county highway and may be a shorter and more direct route.

Sibley County

P-SIB-001 (Kahle) - From the preferred route at CH 13 head east cross-country 3 miles to CH 9. Head north on CH 9 to 310th Street and go east to 391st Avenue and continue east 0.5 miles, south 0.25 miles, then east 1 mile to 375th Lane and head south to 316th Street connecting with the preferred route. This alternative is similar to applicants route segment, and appears to potentially impact fewer homes.

P-SIB-002 (Multiple) - From the preferred route at 324th Street head south cross-country 0.75 miles to U.S. Highway 169. Go east on U.S. Highway 169 across the Minnesota River and rejoin the preferred just east of the river. This alternative seeks to utilize existing Minnesota River crossing (U.S. Highway 169).

P-SIB-003 (Hildebrandt) - From the preferred route head south along State Highway 22 turning east on 320th Street and following 320th to CH 13 connecting with the preferred route. This alternative may avoid bisecting agricultural land and appears to follow existing roads.

Yellow Medicine County

B-YEL-001 (Multiple) From the preferred route at 520th Street, take the alternative route north along State Highway 23. This route alternative appears to utilize State Highway 23 to connect the applicants' preferred route to their alternative route.

VII. REJECTED ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

Twelve of the alternative routes suggested by the ATPs (NW Alternative 1A, NW Alternative 1B, NW Alternative 3, SE Alternative 2, SE Alternative 3, SW Alternative 2, SW Alternative 5, I-90 to I-35, I-29 to I-94, I-90 to U.S. 52, I-90 to MN 56, and U.S. 14 to I-90, as delineated in the ATF reports) and 33 of the alternative routes suggested through public comment will be described in the FIS, but will not be considered for further study or evaluation in the FIS. The route segments were rejected as they either did not meet the stated need of the project as defined in the Certificate of Need (CapX 345 kV Transmission Projects, Docket No. ET-2, E-002, et al./CN-06-1115), had more impacts relative to the criteria used by the Commission in route permit determinations as defined in Minnesota Statute 216E.03, subd. 7., or were incomplete in their description and/or depiction.

The following seven rejected routes are not described in the list below and were rejected because they specifically did not meet the stated need of the project as defined in the Certificate of Need (CapX 345 kV Transmission Projects, Docket No. ET-2, E-002, et al./CN-06-1115): SE Alternative 2, SE Alternative 3, I-90 to I-35, I-29 to I-94, I-90 to U.S. 52, I-90 to MN 56, and U.S. 14 to I-90.

Brown County

P-BRN-006 (Prahl) From the preferred route head south from Terrance Avenue to 260th Street and go west along 260th to 320th Avenue proceed north following along 320th and terminates. This was an incomplete route alternative.

Dakota County

P-DAK-001 (Multiple) – Connect with preferred route at Pillsbury Avenue and 245th Street East and head east along 245th for approximately 0.3 miles before turning southeast and cross-country one-tenth mile then east 0.5 miles and northeast approximately 0.75 miles then turning east-northeast along the east side of Dodd Boulevard connecting with the preferred route at 240th Street West. This alternative heads cross-country bisecting properties in a diagonal fashion. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

P-DAK-003 (Braun) – From north of 240th Street at preferred route head east cross-country to Audrey Street and terminate. This alternative heads cross country bisecting properties in a diagonal fashion and would impact a large wetland complex. This was an incomplete route alternative.

P-DAK-008 (Braun) – Approximately 0.9 miles north of 240th Street West, head east cross-country and along 307th Street West from the preferred route for approximately 1.8 miles to Biscayne Avenue West and follow Biscayne north to 230th Street West connecting with the preferred route. This alternative would run cross-country not following section or property lines bisecting properties and would also run through a fairly large wooded area. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

A-DAK-001 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATF [NW Alt 1A]) – From Interstate 35 head east cross-country to CR 90 (307th Street). Continue east on 307th Street to an existing 69 kV line and follow line northeast connecting with alternate route near Danbury Avenue. This alternative would run cross-country not following section or property lines bisecting properties. The alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

B-DAK-001 (Mertens) – From 220th Street East approximately 0.6 miles east of Collier Court head south cross-country approximately 5.5 miles then east 3.5 miles to Fischer Avenue, follow Fischer north to U.S. Highway 52. From U.S. Highway 52 head north cross-country approximately 4 miles to termination. This alternative does not meet the stated need of the project as defined in the Certificate of Need.

Le Sueur County

P-LES-001 (ATF – Henderson [SW Alt 5]) – From preferred route east of 320th Street follow State Highway 28 northeast to CR 155 and take CR 155 southeast to 320th Street connecting with the preferred route. No reason provided as to why this alternative should be included in scope. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

B-LES-010 (Malecha) – From preferred route, continue east along CH 28 (320th Street) to CH 31 and turn south continuing cross-country to State Highway 99. Proceed east on State Highway 99 to CR 137 and follow CR 137 north to CH 28, connecting with the alternative route. This alternative adds considerable length to project, impacts more homes, and impacts more wetlands than the segment that it is attempting to replace.

Lyon County

P-LYN-002 (Markell) – From 340th Street follow 190th Avenue north turning east and following 350th Street to 220th Avenue. Continue east cross-country approximately 1.5 miles re-connecting with 350th Street and continuing to 265th Street. The route continues east cross-country for another 0.5 miles re-connecting with 350th Street finally connecting to the preferred route. This alternative would negatively impact windbreaks/tree groves, would impact just as many homes, and would span a large wetland complex. This alternative has more negative impacts than the route segment it is intended to replace.

P-LYN-003 (Engels) – Just northwest of 340th Street head southeast along State Highway 68 turning south at 190th Avenue following 190th to 310th Street. Follow 310th Street east with a couple of 0.5 miles sections of cross-country to 280th Avenue connecting to the preferred route. No reason provided as to why this alternative should be included in scope. This alternative would run cross-country not following section or property lines and bisecting properties, includes more cross-country routing, impacts windbreaks/tree groves, and more impacts to homes. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

P-LYN-004 (Markell) – From preferred route at 340th Street head north on 180th Avenue and east along 350th Street terminating at CH 23. This alternative would run through a large wetland complex and is incomplete in its description and depiction.

P-LYN-005 (Markell) - From approximately 0.2 miles west of State Highway 68 proceed south cross-country approximately 0.9 miles to 170th Avenue and south to 320th Street. Proceed east along 320th Street crossing State Highway 68 and heading 0.5 miles through the north portion of the city of Ghent to 280th Avenue connecting with the preferred route. A slight variation of P-LYN-002.

P-LYN-006 (Grandview Township) - From 330th Street follow Lyon Lincoln County Road south following an existing 69 kV line. At approximately 1.5 miles proceed east approximately 5 miles cross-country to 160th Avenue and head south to 300th Street and head east on 300th finally connecting with the preferred route at 280th Avenue. This alternative would run cross-country not following section or property lines bisecting properties. The alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

Nicollet County

P-NCL-001 (Multiple) – From preferred route continue east from 340th Street heading cross-country through Minnesota River Valley for approximately 4.25 miles connecting again at 340th Street and following the road east approximately 1.5 miles with numerous cross-country segments including crossing over Clear Lake finally meeting up with 571st Avenue and heading north connecting with preferred route. A large majority of this alternate route runs cross-country and bisects a number of properties and would cross over Clear Lake (a public water). The alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

Renville County

P-RVL-002 (Fors) - From 420th Street follow 630th Avenue east to 430th Street and continue east cross-country 2 miles connecting with 630th again and head east (1 mile cross-country between 465th Street and CH 4). At 520th Street turn north and follow to 300th Street and head east to 651st Avenue. Follow 651st south approximately 1 mile and head east cross-country for 1.75 miles to 310th Street, following 310th east to 611th Avenue where route again heads cross-country 4 miles connecting to the preferred route. This alternative adds more length of cross-country routing that would bisect single-owner agricultural land. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

Rice County

A-RIC-004 (Jones) – Connects to alternate route at Interstate 35 just south of 45th Street West and heads north cross-country approximately 3 miles to 270th East Street where it terminates. A large majority of this alternative route runs cross-country and bisects a number of properties. The alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace. The alternative was also incomplete in its description and depiction.

A-RIC-005 (Malz) From 141st Avenue head northeast cross-country to CH 6 (45th Street West). Follow CH 6 to the point where the road veers south (Kannebec Avenue) and continue east cross-country approximately 3 miles to CR 96 (Halstad Avenue) and follow Halstad south connecting to the alternative route. A large majority of the alternate route runs cross-country and bi-sects a number of properties. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

Scott County

P-SCT-004 (ATF – Henderson [NW Alt 3]) - From West 270th Street and Aberdeen Avenue head northeast cross-country approximately 1.1 mile to Delmar Avenue and proceed north along Delmar to West 260th Street connecting with the preferred route. This alternative heads cross-country bisecting properties in a diagonal fashion. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

P-SCT-005 (Nytes) At a point on West 270th Street approximately 0.3 miles west of Aberdeen head southeast cross-country 0.1 mile, east 0.25 miles, northeast 0.25 miles, then east 0.75 miles to Delmar Avenue. Head north along Delmar connecting with the preferred route at West 260th Street. A slight variation of P-SCT-004.

P-SCT-006 (Nytes) - At a point on West 270th Street approximately 0.3 miles west of Aberdeen head southeast cross-country 0.1 mile, east 0.25 miles, northeast 0.25 miles, then east 0.75 miles to West 270th Street. Follow 270th east to Naylor Avenue and go northeast cross country approximately 0.25 miles then head north approximately 0.9 miles to West 260th Street connecting with the preferred route. A slight variation of P-SCT-004 and P-SCT-005.

P-SCT-008 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATC [SW Alt 2]) - From CH 2 (East 260th Street) go north on Langford Avenue approximately 4 miles then go east on CH 8 (220th Street East) for approximately 10 miles. Continue east on CH 70 to Interstate 35 and continue south along Interstate 35 connecting with the preferred and alternative route. This alternative would impact many more homes/properties, add considerable length to route, cross or come very near many Minnesota Department of Natural Resources public waters. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

A-SCT-001 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATC [NW Alt 1B]) - Follow existing 115 kV transmission line north from 57th Street West connecting with the proposed/alternative route just north of 245th Street East. This alternative route would have the lake Marion substation moved south. This alternative does not meet the stated need of the project as defined in the Certificate of Need.

B-SCT-001 (Multiple) – Approximately 0.3 miles north of West 263rd Avenue on Fabor Avenue from the alternate route head east cross-country 3 miles connecting with the preferred route at West 260th Street. A large majority of this alternate route runs cross-country and bisects a number of properties. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

Yellow Medicine County

B-YEL-002 (West) - From the alternate route at 290th Avenue to State Highway 23 then north along Highway 23 to 200th Avenue. This was an incomplete route alternative.

VIII. ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVES

The EIS will evaluate a total of 26 alignment alternatives suggested in comments. These are alternatives that fell within the applicants' requested route widths and generally entail site specific concerns such as building on one side of the road or the other, avoiding tree groves, and avoiding recreational areas or environmentally sensitive areas.

IX. REQUIRED PERMITS AND APPROVALS

The EIS will include a list of permits that will be required for the project.

X. ISSUES OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE EIS

The following issues will not be considered or evaluated in the EIS:

1. Any route or substation alternatives not specifically identified in this scoping decision
2. Questions of need, including size, type, and timing; questions of alternative system configurations; or questions of voltage.
3. The no-build option regarding the high voltage transmission line.
4. The impacts of specific energy sources, such as carbon outputs from coal-generated facilities.
5. Policy issues surrounding whether utilities or local government should be liable for the cost to relocate utility poles when roadways are widened.
6. The manner in which land owners are paid for transmission rights of way easements, as that is outside the jurisdiction of Public Utilities Commission.

XI. SCHEDULE

Following is the anticipated schedule:

October 2009 – Draft EIS available.

October and November 2009 – Draft EIS public meetings.

January 2010 – Final EIS available.

Signed this 30 day of June, 2009

STATE OF MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
OFFICE OF ENERGY SECURITY



William Glahn, Director

Kessler, Ellen

From: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2009 1:04 PM
To: Collins, Carly; Lilley, Bliss
Subject: FW: CapX2020 Project
Attachments: RUS NEPA Process Fact Sheet.pdf; ATT00001.txt

-----Original Message-----

From: horsefly@integra.net [mailto:horsefly@integra.net]
Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2009 9:39 AM
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC
Subject: Re: CapX2020 Project

Dear Ms. Strength,
I am a bit confused about the project and the area that is noted in your email.

I-259-001 On my ignorance, but is Webster Township, Rice County, MN part of the Hampton-Rochester-LaCrosse line, or is it another segment? The scope of the project has my head spinning, and I want to be sure that the comments that I have raised, as well as the comments of my neighbors and friends, are attached to the appropriate route. (Although, likely, the concerns are "route wide".)

I-259-002 Also, I am confused about the deadline and whether it applies to the segment that we live in.

Thank you for taking the time to email, your effort is truly appreciated.
Sincerely,
Anastasia Balfany

On Jul 28, 2009, at 8:08 AM, Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC wrote:

> Your comments on the CapX 2020 Hampton-Rochester-LaCrosse 345-kV
> Transmission Line Proposal have been received.
> All comments will be analyzed and summarized in a public scoping
> report, which will be posted on the following web address in
> approximately 60 days:
>
> <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm#Dairyland%20Power%20Cooperative,%20Inc>
> .
>
> The scoping comment period is now closed. Please see the attached
> timeline for future public comment opportunities in the
> Environmental Impact Statement process.
> If you have further comments or questions please send them to:
>
> Stephanie A. Strength
> Environmental Protection Specialist/RD
> 1400 Independence Ave. SW Room # 2244
> Washington, DC 20250-1571
> stephanie.strength@wdc.usda.gov
>
>

I-259-001

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded your comments to the project team dealing with the project in Webster Township with which you have raised concerns.

The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities are striving to provide the most up to date information in a timely manner. Project information is updated regularly on the project website, www.capx2020.com.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

I-259-002

Your comment has been noted. Please refer to comment response I-259-001.

>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: horsefly@integra.net [mailto:horsefly@integra.net]
> Sent: Tuesday, July 07, 2009 3:05 PM
> To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC
> Subject: CapX2020 Project
>
> Dear Ms. Strength,
> I am strongly opposed to the CapX2020 project, and have attached a
> letter documenting some of my concerns, and specifically the use of
> 50th Street as an alternative route for the project.
> I want to be sure to note that I feel that both 50th Street and 57th
> Street in Webster, MN (Rice County) are unsuitable for identical
> reasons, with 50th Street slightly more so, due to the even closer
> proximity to the Sky Harbor Airpark.
> Again, thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to call
> or email with any questions or comments.
> Sincerely,
> Anastasia Balfany
> 3720 50th Street West
> Webster, MN 55088
> 952-652-2786
>



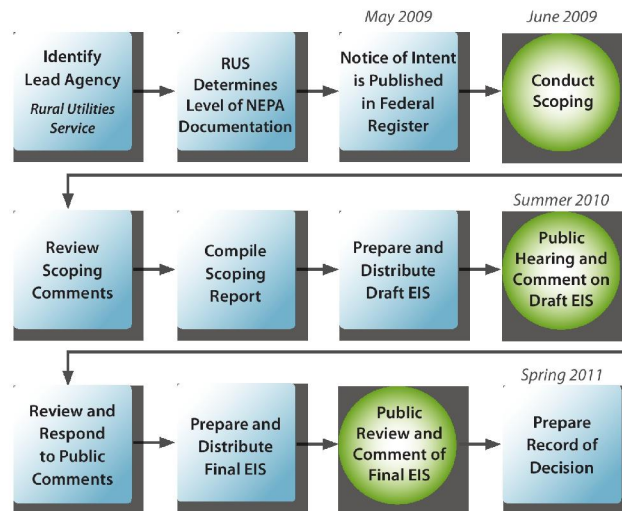
FEDERAL REVIEW PROCESS

Dairyland Power Cooperative has requested financial assistance from Rural Utilities Service (RUS), a federal agency that administers the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Programs, for its anticipated 11 percent ownership interest in the proposed Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345 kilovolt transmission line project. RUS has determined that its funding of Dairyland's ownership interest is a federal action and therefore subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

RUS and other federal agencies involved in the NEPA review will jointly prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Each federal agency will independently develop its own decision document. The EIS preparation process is detailed below.

The NEPA process evaluates the project's potential affects on environmental resources, such as:

- land use
- threatened and endangered species
- wetlands
- cultural and historic properties
- socioeconomics
- scenic areas



www.usda.gov/rus

The table below shows permit, regulatory compliance or other coordination required by federal agencies.

Agency	Permit, regulatory compliance, or other coordination
RUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative Evaluation Study and Macro-Corridor Study • NEPA Compliance
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 10 Permit of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403) for crossing the Mississippi River
USACE and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationwide permit or individual permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1977
U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmland Conversion Impact Rating (Form AD-1006)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use authorization if right-of-way required on National Wildlife Refuge or Wetland Management District lands (Standard Form 299) and Special Use Permit if crossing National Wildlife Refuge • Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531–1544; 50 C.F.R. 22 consultation) • Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668, 50 C.F.R. 22) • Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 701–712)
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form 7460–1, Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace
National Park Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation: Section 7 of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act 1968 (if proposal affects federally designated areas)

Public scoping

The RUS NEPA process provides several opportunities for public review and comment (identified in green on the NEPA process graphic). The CapX2020 utilities had several rounds of public information meetings prior to the NEPA scoping meetings; public comments received at those meetings were considered in corridor development and route option identification. Public comments received at scoping meetings will be recorded as part of the project record.

The NEPA scoping process serves multiple goals for the proposed project, including:

- Soliciting public comments
- Discovering alternatives to a proposed action (preferred route)
- Identifying significant impacts
- Eliminating insignificant issues
- Communicating information
- Consulting with agencies and organizations

Track EIS development, download comment forms, and access all public documentation at the RUS Web site, <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>.

Please contact Stephanie Strength for more information:

USDA, Rural Utilities Service
1400 Independence Ave. SW, MAIL STOP 1571
Washington, DC 20250-1571



Kessler, Ellen

From: Lilley, Bliss
Sent: Friday, July 24, 2009 1:35 PM
To: Collins, Carly
Subject: FW: CapX2020
Attachments: CapX Environmental Criteria.pdf

From: Schultz, Dawn R [mailto:dawn.schultz@xcelenergy.com]
Sent: Friday, July 24, 2009 1:32 PM
To: decocker_5@hotmail.com
Cc: stephanie.strength@usda.gov; Lilley, Bliss
Subject: CapX2020

Dear Denise,

Thank you for your e-mail. When we are considering routing, we absolutely consider impact to private landowners. State routing criteria generally promotes the view of limiting impacts to sensitivities (for examples of sensitivities, please see the attached) and promoting the concept of corridor sharing. Once the potential route corridors are determined, the sensitivities along those various options are identified and route segments are compared against each other to determine which segments provide linear connectivity while impacting the fewest sensitivities.

Given the uncertainty of which route would be chosen, and where specifically the line would be placed along any given route, it's hard for me to discuss impact to your trees. We would certainly meet with you prior to placing any poles to discuss with you your specific concerns.

As for TV reception, there is very little risk that the line would have any interference with your TV signals. The only way the line could interfere is if a pole were placed very close to the receiver and physically blocked the signal. We're committed to careful design in general and avoiding any interference on any communication or television reception in particular.

Your comments are being forwarded to Stephanie Strength for inclusion in the USDA Rural Utility Service's federal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Comments for the EIS are due July 25. Should you think of anything else, you may also e-mail Stephanie directly. Thank you for your input.

Dawn Schultz
Technician, Siting & Land Rights - North
Xcel Energy
CapX2020
800-238-7968

Denise Cocker (507) 843-5281 decocker_5@hotmail.com
59684 415th Ave
Mazeppa MN 55956

Concerns: The proposed power lines have caused us a great deal of stress and sleepless nights. The newspaper said that all affected homeowners were notified. That is not the case for us. Although we had read about the proposed lines, none of the routes were actually affecting us personally. It was only the last week in May that our neighbor informed us that a route would be changed. We went to the meeting in Plainview on June 16th and

- there discovered the route went right across our front yard. We still have not been officially notified except for general letters informing us of informational meetings. Earlier in May we discovered a pink ribbon tied to a tree up in our woods. We were upset that someone had trespassed on our land with out permission. We now assume it had to do with the power lines.
- I-260-001** | *Do you take into consideration that the proposed power lines are in someone's front yard? Our house is built into the hillside with windows only on the south and west sides. Our three bedrooms and living room all face south overlooking our front yard.
- I-260-003** | *We heat our house and greenhouse exclusively with wood heat. We are dependent on the trees in our woods for our future needs for heat. It would be a hardship if trees are cleared for power lines.
- I-260-002** | *A few years back we bought a dish so that we could finally get TV reception. Because we are basically surrounded by hills, the only direction we can point the dish is south. Will these power lines interrupt our ability to pull in TV stations? 7/23/2009 12:06:00 PM

I-260-001

Your letter/comment card has been comment noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line. As Ms. Schultz stated in her letter the impact to landowners and land use is taken into consideration in the routing process.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

I-260-002

Your comment has been noted. Interference with electrical equipment caused by the transmission lines will be addressed with individual landowners if the problem arises.

I-260-003

Your letter/comment card has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process along with potential impacts to vegetation resources will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Additional The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.



Environmental Siting Criteria

Opportunities

For transmission lines, advantageous siting "opportunities" are characterized by corridors with the potential for sharing or running alongside existing facilities, infrastructure, and landscape features.

Advantageous substation "opportunities" are sites that allow a substation to be located on or adjacent to a property with existing electric facilities or compatible structures.

Sensitivities

"Sensitivities" are those environmental siting criteria, including point locations, areas, or features, which are taken into account with regard to routing, construction, or additional licensing/permitting procedures.

Opportunities
Existing ROWs (electric transmission lines, railroads, pipelines, highways/roads)
Identified utility corridors
Section lines/property lines
Sensitivities
Population centers
Existing/planned residential areas
Memorial parks
National register historic sites
Designated or registered national historic districts
Native American tribal land
National landmarks
National parks/monuments
National recreation areas
State parks and recreation areas
Scenic areas/scenic travel routes
Wild and scenic rivers
Special management areas (areas of environmental concern [ACECs], natural conservation area [NCAs])
National and state wilderness areas
State natural areas/scientific areas
Nature conservancy preserves
National wildlife refuges
State wildlife refuges, wildlife areas, game management areas
Threatened and endangered species critical habitat areas
Unique habitats (habitat conservation plans)
Waterfowl nesting or rearing areas
Floodways/floodplains
Open water expanses greater than 1,000 feet
Wetlands considered areas of special natural resource interest
Airport obstruction-free zones/flight approach paths
VORTAC tower sites
Military reservations/installations
Other federal and state land (not otherwise protected)
Mines
Geologically unstable or highly erosive areas
Agriculture types (row crops, irrigated crops, vineyards, orchards)
Mechanical wheeled or line irrigation systems
Schools/daycare centers

*Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency • Dairyland Power Cooperative • Great River Energy
Minnesota Power • Minnesota Power Cooperative • Missouri River Energy Services • Otter Tail Power Company • Rochester Public Utilities
Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency • Wisconsin Public Power Inc. • Xcel Energy*

Kessler, Ellen

From: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 3:12 PM
To: Lilley, Bliss
Cc: Collins, Carly
Subject: FW: Powerline on 50th Ave
Attachments: 08-1474 FINAL EIS SCOPE (Text).pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

From: Scott.Ek@state.mn.us [mailto:Scott.Ek@state.mn.us]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 9:38 AM
To: jodydoyle@integra.net; Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC
Subject: RE: Powerline on 50th Ave

Ms. Doyle,

There has been no decision made on the route for the proposed Brookings - Hampton 345 kV transmission line. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Scoping Decision Document was recently issued on June 30, 2009. The scoping document is one step in the environmental review process for transmission line projects. The scope outlines the issues, concerns, and alternatives suggested by the advisory task forces and in comments made by the public and government units during the scoping process conducted in March and April of this year. The Office of Energy Security (OES) will now begin preparing the EIS for this proposed project using the Scoping Decision Document as a guide or "blueprint" for the issues and alternatives to be addressed and analyzed. I have attached a copy of the Scoping Decision Document for your convenience. The figures are not attached as the file size is quite large for email, but can be viewed at: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?id=19860>.

The draft EIS is anticipated to be available in October 2009. After the draft EIS has been issued the OES will conduct public meetings in select areas along the route that will provide the public an opportunity to comment on the information in the draft EIS. There will also be a public comment period tied to these meetings that will enable the public to send written or email comments. The comments will then be addressed by the OES and incorporated into the final EIS. The draft EIS and the final EIS make up the complete EIS and will be forwarded to the Public Utilities Commission to assist them in making a decision on a final route for the proposed transmission line sometime in January 2010. So as you can see there is still quite a bit of work and fact gathering to be done before a decision on a route permit can be made. Many factors go into making a transmission line route decision.

If have not already done so, I suggest you add your contact information to the project mailing list managed by OES at: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/#MailingLists>. This will ensure you receive any future notices regarding the proposed project.

Scoping Document - <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/documents/19860/08-1474%20FINAL%20EIS%20SCOPE%20063009.pdf>

General project information - <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?id=19860>

Please feel free to contact me anytime with questions or concerns you may have or just to find out where we are at with regards to the schedule.

Sincerely,

SCOTT EK

Office of Energy Security | Energy Facility Permitting
85 7th Place East, Suite 500 | St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198

1

I-261-001

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded your comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

Office: 651.296.8813 | Fax: 651.297.7891
scott.ek@state.mn.us
www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us
www.energy.mn.gov

From: Jody [mailto:jodydoyle@integra.net]
Sent: Thursday, July 09, 2009 8:48 PM
To: stephanie.strength@usda.gov; Scott.Ek@state.mn.us
Subject: Powerline on 50th Ave

I am writing about concerns of a possible powerline on 50th Ave in Webster. This powerline would be in the flight path of the Sky Harbor Airpark.

The Sky Harbor Airpark has been in existence for 35 plus years. It is also the busiest airpark in the state of MN. There are 50 homes and 72 registered airplanes on the airpark. A powerline in the flight path is a huge safety and liability issue. If harm or death occurred because the powerline was in the way of approaching aircraft it would open the Rice county and power company up for major lawsuits.

Jody Doyle Pilot
3299 45th St W.
Webster, MN 55088

952-652-2042



**In the Matter of the Route Permit
Application for a 345 kV Transmission
Line from Brookings County, South
Dakota to Hampton, Minnesota.**

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SCOPING DECISION DOCUMENT
PUC Docket No. ET2/TL-08-1474**

The above matter has come before the Director of the Office of Energy Security (OES) for a decision on the Scope of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be prepared on the Great River Energy and Xcel Energy (applicants) route permit application before the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for a proposed transmission line between Brookings County, South Dakota, and Hampton, Minnesota, under the full permitting process (Minnesota Rules 7849.5200 to 7849.5340).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicants propose to construct and operate a 345 kilovolt (kV) transmission line, approximately 237 miles long, beginning at the state's western border near Hendricks, Minnesota, and ending south of the Twin Cities metro area near Hampton, Minnesota. The applicants have proposed two possible routes for the transmission line, a preferred route and an alternate route. These routes would cross portions of the following counties: Lincoln, Lyon, Yellow Medicine, Chippewa, Redwood, Brown, Renville, Sibley, Le Sueur, Scott, Rice, and Dakota. The project would also include the construction of four new substations and the expansion of four existing substations. New substations include the Hazel Creek substation near Granite Falls, the Helena substation near New Prague, the Cedar Mountain substation near Franklin, and the Hampton substation near Hampton (Figures 1 to 5).

The applicants are requesting a 1,000 foot wide route width for the majority of the proposed project. The maximum route width of 1.25 miles is requested for the areas where new substations are proposed and a number of other locations along the route to facilitate system interconnection and address river crossing areas and/or environmental and land use concerns.

The applicants propose using single-structure steel poles which would require a 150-foot right-of-way. A 100-foot right-of-way would be required for the route segment connecting to the Cedar Mountain substation near Franklin, Minnesota. There may also be some limited situations along the route where specialty structures (H-frames or triple circuit structures) may be required. A right-of-way up to 180 feet in width would be required in these instances.

Proposed construction of the transmission line would begin in 2011 with completion by 2013.

PROJECT PURPOSE

As indicated by the applicants in the route permit application, the project has been designed to improve the reliability of the bulk electric system serving Minnesota and portions of neighboring states and would also serve to meet infrastructure additions that have been deemed needed to meet the forecasted growth in demand of several thousand megawatts over the course of the next decade.

The applicants also indicate the project would enhance customer service capabilities in western Minnesota and the southern suburbs of the Twin Cities. Moreover, the project would provide renewable resource generation outlet capability of approximately 700 megawatts from the Buffalo Ridge area in southwest Minnesota. Detailed information regarding the purpose and need for this transmission project is provided in the May 22, 2009, Order issued by the Commission granting Certificates of Need for the CapX 345 kV Transmission Projects, Docket No. ET-2, E-002, et al./CN-06-1115 (<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/edockets/searchDocuments.do?method=showDocketsSearch&showDocket=true>).

REGULATORY BACKGROUND

The applicants filed a route permit application on December 29, 2008, under the full permitting process of the Power Plant Siting Act (Minnesota Statute 216B). The application was accepted as complete by the Commission on January 29, 2009. Under the full permitting process the Commission has one year from the date the application was accepted as complete to make a decision on the route permit.

SCOPING PROCESS

Route permit applications for high voltage transmission lines are subject to environmental review in accordance with Minnesota Rules 7849.5200 to 7849.5340 (full permitting process). Scoping is the first step in the permitting process after application acceptance. The scoping process has two primary purposes, to ensure that the public has a chance to participate in determining what routes and issues to study in the EIS, and to help focus the EIS on the most important issues surrounding the route permit decision.

OES staff collected and reviewed comments on the scope of the EIS by convening two advisory task forces, holding public scoping meetings throughout the proposed project area, and accepting written comments from March 30, 2009, through April 30, 2009. This scope identifies potential human/environmental issues and project route or substation site alternatives that will be addressed in the EIS. The scope also presents a tentative schedule of the environmental review process.

Advisory Task Forces

Two geographically-based advisory task forces (ATFs) were established by the OES, the Lake Marion to Hampton ATF and the Minnesota River Crossings to New Prague ATF. The ATFs were each charged with: (1) identifying local site or route specific impacts and issues of local concern, and (2) identifying alternative transmission line routes or substation locations in their respective area of concern that may maximize positive impacts and minimize or avoid negative impacts of the project. The task forces each met three times between March and April 2009. The recommendations of the ATFs have been considered during the preparation of this scope and can be found in their respective reports. The ATF reports are available at <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?id=19860>.

Public Scoping Meetings

Twelve public information meetings were conducted by the OES between March 30 to April 9, 2009, at nine different locations that included the cities of Marshall, Hendricks, Granite Falls, Redwood Falls, Gaylord, Henderson, New Prague, Lakeville, and Cannon Falls. Approximately 1,065 people attended the twelve public meetings, according to the meeting sign-in sheets. The scoping meetings provided the public an opportunity to learn about the proposed project and the route permitting process, review the route permit application, and ask questions and submit comments. A court reporter was present at each of the public meetings and transcribed questions asked and comments made by the public as well as responses from the OES and the applicants.

Public Comments

A public comment period beginning the day of the first public scoping meeting and ending on April 30, 2009, provided the public an additional opportunity to submit comments and alternative routes to be considered for the scope of the EIS. A total of 999 comments were received by the close of the comment period which included 801 written or emailed comments and 198 oral comments from the public scoping meetings. There was also approximately 827 form letter/postcards from the Watt Munisotaram Temple indicating opposition to the line near their Temple.

All of the written and oral comments submitted at the scoping meetings along with comments received by mail and email were reviewed and entered into a database. Each comment was evaluated for issues or concerns that should be considered for detailed evaluation in the EIS and were classified based on the major topics of the comments. Table 1 below summarizes the major issues raised in these comments, as well as the relative frequency the issue was raised.

Table 1. Major Issues Raised During Public Scoping Period

Issue	Number of Times Issue Mentioned	Percentage of Major Issues
Health/EMF	428	43%
Property Value/Compensation	369	37%
Specific Route Selection (Suggested Alternatives)	297	30%
Proximity to Homes	294	29%
Other*	228	23%
General Route Selection (Support or Non-Support of Proposed Routes)	174	17%
Rare or Unique Species	138	14%
Aesthetics	133	13%
Stray Voltage	83	8%
Trees/Wind Breaks	45	5%
TV/Radio/GPS	41	4%
Noise	37	4%

*Other included issues related to: data in route permit application, general opposition to the project, project need, and easement negotiation process, among others.

The public suggested over 297 route alternatives to the applicants' proposed routes through comment. Of the 297 route alternative suggestions, 197 of them were comments expressing opposition or preference for the applicants' preferred route, alternative route, or no project at all. This left 100 remaining route alternatives that were divided into those that fell within the applicants' requested route width and those that fell outside the requested route width. After further refinement and removal of missed duplicates, 26 alternatives fell within the requested route width and were categorized as alignment alternatives (an "alignment alternative" in this case means a suggested change in the applicants' proposed transmission centerline, such as a shift from one side of a roadway to the other, but where the line would still be located within the original route width) and 74 alternatives fell outside the requested route width and were categorized as route alternatives. Alternative routes recommended by the ATFs were also included in this review.

The task force meeting reports and scoping meeting comment reports, as well as each individual comment (letter or email) are available on the project website maintained by the Commission at:
<http://energy/facilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?id=19860>.

MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED

Having reviewed the matter, consulted with OES Energy Facility Permitting staff, and in accordance with Minnesota Rule 7849.5300, I hereby make the following Scoping Decision.

The applicants' route permit application describes their route analysis and contains the information required by Minnesota Rule 7894.5220, subp. 2, as determined by the Commission. The EIS will summarize the process the applicants' used to identify, evaluate, and select the routes. The EIS will also verify and supplement information provided in the route permit application and will incorporate the information by reference as appropriate.

The EIS on the proposed Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line project will address and provide information on the following matters:

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Project Description
- B. Purpose of the Transmission Line
- C. Project Location
- D. Route Description
- E. Route Width
- F. Rights-of-Way
- G. Project Cost

II. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- A. Certificate of Need
- B. Route Permit
- C. Environmental Review Process

III. ENGINEERING AND OPERATION DESIGN

- A. Transmission Line Conductors
- B. Transmission Line Structures
- C. Substations

IV. CONSTRUCTION

- A. Transmission Line and Structures
- B. Substations
- C. Property/Right-of-Way Acquisition
- D. Cleanup and Restoration
- E. Damage Compensation
- F. Maintenance
- G. Underground Options

V. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT, POTENTIAL IMPACTS, AND MITIGATIVE MEASURES

The EIS will include a discussion of the human and environmental resources potentially impacted by the project and its alternatives. Potential impacts, both positive and negative, of the proposed project and each alternative considered will be described. Based on the impacts identified, the EIS will describe mitigative measures that could reasonably be implemented to reduce or eliminate the identified impacts.

- A. Environmental Setting
- B. Socioeconomic Setting
- C. Human Settlement
 - 1. Noise
 - 2. Aesthetics
 - 3. Proximity to Structures
 - a. Homes and Farmsteads (including farming related structures such as silos, grain bins, etc.)
 - b. Businesses
 - c. Schools/Daycares
 - d. Hospitals
 - e. Cemeteries
 - 4. Displacement
 - 5. Tree Groves/Windbreaks
 - 6. Existing Utilities (pipelines, propane tanks, septic systems)
 - 7. Domestic Water Well Installation/Maintenance
- D. Public Health and Safety
 - 1. Electric and Magnetic Fields
 - 2. Implantable Medical Devices
 - 3. Stray Voltage
 - 4. Explosives/Fireworks
- E. Recreation
 - 1. Parks (city, county, state, and federal)
 - 2. Golf Courses
 - 3. Trails
- F. Transportation and Public Services
 - 1. Emergency Services
 - 2. Airports
 - 3. Highways and Roads (including scenic highways/byways and rest stops)

- G. Interference
 - 1. Radio and Television (digital and satellite)
 - 2. Internet
 - 3. Cellular Phone
 - 4. GPS-Based Agriculture Navigation Systems
- H. Archaeological and Historic Resources
- I. Zoning and Compatibility/Federal, State and Local Government Planning
- J. Land-Based Economies
 - 1. Agriculture
 - a. Prime Farmland
 - b. Organic Farms
 - c. Livestock
 - d. Aerial Crop Spraying/Dusting
 - e. Bee Keeping/Bee Colonies
 - 2. Forestry
 - 3. Mining
- K. Property Values
 - 1. Residential
 - 2. Industrial
 - 3. Agriculture
- L. Air Quality (As it pertains specifically to this transmission line project only.)
- M. Natural Resources
 - 1. Surface Water
 - a. Lakes
 - b. Surface Flows
 - 2. Groundwater
 - 3. Wetlands
 - 4. Floodplains
 - 5. State Wildlife Management Areas/Scientific Natural Areas
 - 6. National Wildlife Refuge/Waterfowl Production Areas
 - 7. Forests
- N. Flora
- O. Fauna
- P. Rare and Unique Natural Resources/Critical Habitat

VI. ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO BE EVALUATED IN EIS

The EIS will identify and evaluate alternative routes and route segments to the proposed project. Nine of the 21 ATF identified routes and 38 of the 71 alternative routes suggest through public comment will be evaluated in the EIS and are presented below and illustrated in Figures 6 to 16.

Brown County

P-BRN-001 (Prah) – Approximately 0.5 miles south of 280th Street on Terrance Avenue head east cross-country approximately 1 mile to 330th Avenue. Head north along 330th approximately 0.25 miles and go east cross-country 0.25 miles and then north 0.25 miles connecting with the preferred route. This alternative is intended to maximize the distance between existing homes and the transmission line.

P-BRN-002 (Prah) – Approximately 0.5 miles south of 280th Street on Terrace Avenue head east cross-country to 325th Avenue and proceed north connecting with the preferred route. This alternative is intended to maximize the distance between existing homes and the transmission line and is a variation of P-BRN-001.

P-BRN-003 (Prah) – Approximately 0.5 miles south of 280th Street on Terrace Avenue head east cross-country to 320th Avenue and proceed north following along 320th to where it forks and proceed north cross-country 0.5 miles north then 0.25 miles west to 420th Street connecting with the preferred route. This alternative is intended to maximize the distance between existing homes and the transmission line.

P-BRN-004 (Prah) – Approximately 0.5 miles south of 330th Street on Terrace Avenue head east cross-country to 330th Avenue and follow 330th Avenue north for approximately 1 mile and turn east cross-country to 325th Avenue. Follow 325th Avenue north where it connects with the preferred route. This alternative is intended to maximize the distance between existing homes and the transmission line and is a variation of P-BRN-001 and P-BRN-002.

P-BRN-005 (Prah) – Approximately 0.5 miles south of 330th Street on Terrace Avenue head east cross-country to 330 Avenue and follow 330th Avenue north for approximately 1.25 miles then go east cross-country 0.25 miles and then north 0.25 miles connecting with the preferred route. This alternative is intended to maximize the distance between existing homes and the transmission line and is a variation of P-BRN-001, P-BRN-002, and P-BRN-004.

Dakota County

P-DAK-002 (Kaufenberg) – Follow Interstate 35 north from where the preferred and alternative routes meet, crossing Interstate 35 east to 215th Street West. Proceed east along 215th Street to Hamburg Avenue and follow it north to Lakeville Boulevard. Proceed east on Lakeville Boulevard then south on Denmark Avenue to 225th Street West where it would head southeast cross-country 0.5 miles and then north-northwest 0.3 miles connecting with the preferred route. This alternative seeks to avoid existing residences on 240th Street West and reduce the amount of cross-country route.

P-DAK-004 (Rother) – Approximately 0.5 miles west of U.S. Highway 52 (Coates Boulevard) the route would head north cross-country approximately 0.25 miles then turn east for 0.5 miles to Coates Boulevard. This alternative was suggested to avoid bisecting agricultural land and instead follow property/section lines.

P-DAK-005 (Multiple) – Approximately 0.5 miles east of Blaine Avenue the route would turn north from 220th Street cross-country for approximately 0.5 miles then east 0.5 miles to Blaine Avenue. Proceed north along Blaine Avenue approximately 0.2 miles and head east cross-country for approximately 2 miles to 215th Street East and on to Coates Boulevard. This alternative seeks to avoid the Hampton Woods area, the Watt Munisotaram Buddhist Temple and residences along 220th Street East.

P-DAK-006 (Multiple) - Interstate 35 north from where the preferred and alternative routes meet, crossing Interstate 35 east to 215th Street West. Proceed east along 215th Street to Flagstaff Avenue. The route would continue east cross-country approximately 1 mile then turn south 1.5 miles, briefly running along Essex Avenue eventually turning east for 1.2 miles connecting with the preferred route. This alternative seeks to avoid existing residences on 240th Street West and reduce the amount of cross-country route.

P-DAK-007 (Mertens) - From the alternative route at Interstate 35 and 57th Street West head east cross-country approximately 3 miles to 307th Street West. Continue along 307th Street to Fiveleth Avenue and east cross-country approximately 1 mile and northeast following along an existing rail line and 69 kV transmission line for approximately 7 miles to 240th Street West connecting with the preferred route. This alternative utilizes an existing 69 kV right-of-way and railroad, may impact fewer homes, and may be a more direct and shorter route.

P-DAK-009 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATF [NW Alt 2]) - From preferred route follow Pillsbury Avenue north to 215th Street West. Head east along 215th Street to Cedar Avenue and continue east cross-country for approximately 0.5 miles then southeast 1.8 miles and again east approximately 1 mile to 220th Street West. Proceed down 220th Street to Denmark Avenue and head south along Denmark veering southeast cross-country at 225th Street West connecting with the preferred route. This alternative is a variation of P-DAK-006 which also seeks to avoid existing residences on 240th Street West and reduce the amount of cross-country route.

P-DAK-010 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATF [Buddhist Temple]) - Approximately 0.5 miles east of Blaine Avenue the route would turn north from 220th Street cross-country for approximately 0.5 miles then east 0.5 miles to Blaine Avenue and continue east cross-country for approximately 2 miles to 215th Street East and on to U.S. Highway 52 (Coates Boulevard). This alternative is a variation of P-DAK-005 and also seeks to avoid the Hampton Woods area, the Watt Munisotaram Buddhist Temple and residences along 220th Street East.

A-DAK-002 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATF [NE Alt 3 “right-angle” and NW Alt 1C]) - From Northfield Boulevard east along County Highway (CH) 86 (280th Street East) then north on Fischer Avenue to U.S. Highway 52. Route continues north cross-country terminating just north of Northfield Boulevard. This alternative seeks to avoid the city of Hampton and reduce number of potentially impacted homes.

A-DAK-003 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATF [NE Alt 3 “diagonal”]) - Travel east from alternate route at Hampton Boulevard/240th Street East to U.S. Highway 52. Head north on U.S. Highway 52 to CH 47 (Northfield Boulevard) continuing northeast along CH 47 approximately 0.75 miles and terminating. This alternative seeks to avoid the city of Hampton and reduce number of potentially impacted homes.

A-DAK-004 (Gerber) - From just north of Lewiston Boulevard head northeast cross-country 240th Street East. Head north from 240th Street East cross-country to CH 47 (Northfield Boulevard). This alternative seeks to avoid the city of Hampton.

A-DAK-005 (Kaufenberg) – From Interstate 35 head east along 280th Street E/W connecting with alternative route at CH 47 (Northfield Boulevard). This alternative may utilize more existing roads and reduce approximately 6 miles of cross-country route bisecting agricultural land.

Le Sueur County

P-LES-002 (Binczik) - From 320th Street proceed north along 241st to Street 302nd Street and turn east following 302nd to CH 32 and connecting with the preferred route. This alternative seeks to reduce transmission line proliferation in the area (other lines exist) and would follow along existing roads.

A-LES-001 (Schmidt) Connect with alternative route approximately 0.5 miles north of 310th Street and proceed east cross-country to Le Sueur Avenue. Follow Le Sueur Avenue south to 70th Street West connecting with the alternative route. This alternative may reduce the impacts to homes within 300 feet of the transmission centerline from 6 homes to 1 home.

A-LES-002 (Hoy) – Follow 210th Street north from the intersection of 300th Street and 210th Street. At approximately 0.75 miles turn east cross-country for approximately 0.75 miles and turn southeast connecting with alternative at 300th Street. The alternative seeks to avoid residence/daycare on 300th Street.

B-LES-001 (ATF – Henderson [NE Alt 2]) - From preferred route head north along 265th Avenue, west on CH 28, north on 271st Avenue to West 280th Street. Proceed east on 280th to German Road and head north on German Road for approximately 1 mile then continuing cross-country 1.3 miles reconnecting with German Road and ultimately the alternative route. This alternative appears to utilize more existing right-way and seeks to avoid existing residences, and an airfield.

B-LES-002 (ATF – Henderson [NE Alt 5]) – From the alternative route on CH 28 near Township Highway 30 head northeast following along existing 345 kV transmission line to West 270th Street connecting with the preferred route. This alternative may reduce transmission line proliferation by utilizing an existing 345 kV transmission line right-of-way.

B-LES-005 (Meyer) From the preferred route follow U.S. Highway 169 northeast from just south of Dobby Lane to German Road connecting with the alternative route. This alternative seeks to utilize U.S. Highway 169 as a route connecting the preferred to the alternative reducing some of the need for new right-of-way and impacts to homes.

B-LES-006 (Multiple) - From the preferred route on 320th Street head north on 265th Avenue for 1 mile to CH 28. Head west on CH 28, north on 271st Avenue, east on West 280th Street, and north on German Road ultimately connecting to the alternate route. A variation of B-LES-001, B-LES-003, and B-LES-004.

B-LES-007 (Davis) - Follow preferred route from river crossing to CH 32 and head north to County Road (CR) 157. Proceed east on CR 157 and north on CR 121 connecting with alternate route. Proposed by the Scott County Board. This alternative may avoid conflicts with the preferred route along CH 2 as identified in the Scott County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update, such as future public right-of-way expansion.

B-LES-008 (ATF Henderson [NE Alt 4]) From the preferred at 221st Avenue head east along CH 28 to 141st Avenue connecting with the alternative route. This alternative follows a county road/established right-of-way and may avoid impacts to dairy farms, day cares, and wetlands, and may also reduce the amount of route that goes cross-country.

B-LES-009 (Anonymous) – From preferred route follow CH 32 (Hickory Boulevard) north to approximately 0.5 miles north of West 280th Street and continue north cross-country to West 260th Street. Turn east continuing cross-country for approximately 4 miles connecting with the preferred route at West 260th Street. This alternative seeks to reduce potential impacts to homes and avoid a pyrotechnics plant.

B-LES-011 (Anonymous) – Approximately 0.25 miles north of 302nd Street head east cross-country from CH 32 for approximately 1 mile connecting with the alternative route at 300th Street. Follow 300th Street to 181st Avenue and turn north following 181st north connecting with the preferred at West 260th Street. This alternative may follow more existing roads than the segment it is meant to replace.

Lincoln County

P-LNC-001 (Sterzinger) - From CR 134 go north on CH 8. Then east cross-country to 340th Street continue east cross-country to Lyon Lincoln Road. This alternative appears to follow more existing roads and would impact a similar number of homes when compared to the segment it is meant to replace.

Lyon County

P-LYN-001 (Grandview Township) - From 330th proceed north along CR 8. At 340th Street head east cross-country for approximately 1 mile to 340th Street following 340th to Lyon Lincoln Road and continue east cross-country connecting to the preferred route at 340th Street. This alternative seeks to reduce potential impacts to homes.

A-LYN-001 (Prins) From alternative route proceed south on CH 9 to 240th Street. Head east on 240th Street to 310th Avenue and head north on 310th connecting with the alternative route. This alternative avoids bisecting agriculture property and appears to follow an existing road.

A-LYN-002 (Maeyaert) – Head north on 170th Avenue from the intersection of 260th Street and 170th. Continue on 170th Avenue to CH 19. Proceed east on CH 19 for approximately 3.5 miles turning south cross-country for approximately 1.5 miles then east for approximately 1.25 miles and east-southeast approximately 0.75 miles crossing CH 23, finally turning south and connecting with the alternative route. This alternative appears to follow section lines where the alternative does not and provides an alternative Redwood River crossing and avoids a golf course and residential area. This alternative segment was originally looked at by the applicants.

A-LYN-003 (City of Lynd) – Same as Alternative A-LYN-002 except after crossing CH 23 the route would continue in an east-southeast direction to 320th Avenue and follow 320th south connecting with the alternative route. The alternative may avoid new future residential developments north of the city of Lind, and encroachment of Savannah Oaks Golf Course. The alternate is also outside Lind city limits and may avoid disturbing a heavily wooded area near the Redwood River.

B-LYN-001 (Multiple) – From the preferred route follow State Highway 23 north. This alternative may minimize impacts to agriculture land, potentially impact fewer homes, and would follow existing State Highway 23 to Granite Falls.

Redwood County

P-RDW-001 (Zwaschka) – From 290th Street at Crown Avenue head south cross-country to State Highway 19. Proceed east along State Highway 19 connecting with the preferred route at Dayton Avenue. This alternative seeks to avoid residences.

A-RDW-001 (Prins) – Route would turn east from CH 7 approximately ¼ mile north of 350th Street and head cross-country for approximately 0.5 miles and turn north connecting with the alternative route. This alternative may avoid bisecting agricultural property owned by one entity by moving to a shared property line.

Renville County

P-RVL-001 (Multiple) – From the preferred route at 420th Street follow 640th Avenue east (road changes to 300th Street) continue east to 571st Avenue connecting with the preferred route. This alternative was initially evaluated by the applicants and may reduce the length of the route by approximately 4 miles impacting a similar amount of homes as the segment it is meant to replace.

P-RVL-003 (Hoffbeck) – From 420th Street follow State Highway 19 east to 460th Street where the route would head north cross-country to 660th Avenue connecting with the preferred route. The alternative seeks to reduce transmission line proliferation in the area (other lines exist) and appears to follow along existing roads and railroad.

Rice County

A-RIC-001 (Lake Marion to Hampton - ATE [NE Alt 2]) - From alternative route at 141st Avenue continue cross-country approximately 1.5 miles to Leaf Trail. Follow Leaf Trail southeast to 60th Street West. Take 60th east to CH 19 connecting to the alternative route. This alternative may reduce impacts to homes and avoid future growth of the city of Lonsdale.

A-RIC-003 (Streck) - From 57th Street West continue north along Elmore Avenue to 50th Street West. At 50th Street turn east cross-country to Interstate 35 connecting with the alternative route. This alternative is intended to avoid homes along 57th Street West.

Scott County

P-SCT-001 (Zweber) - From the preferred route at Jonquil Avenue follow East 250th Street east to Texas Avenue. Follow Texas Avenue north connecting with the preferred route. This alternative may avoid bisecting agricultural land and follow existing roads in its entirety.

P-SCT-002 (Multiple) - From West 270th Street and Aberdeen Avenue head east cross-country approximately 1 mile to Delmar Avenue and proceed north along Delmar to West 260th Street connecting with the preferred route. This alternative may reduce potential impacts to homes on Aberdeen Avenue and West 260th Street.

P-SCT-003 (Lake Marion to Hampton - ATE [NW Alt 3]) - From the preferred route at 245th Street East and Pillsbury Avenue head east along 245th Avenue to Dodd Boulevard connecting with the preferred route. This alternative may impact fewer homes, appears to follow existing roads, reduce cross-country routing, and may be shorter and more direct than the segment it is meant to replace.

P-SCT-007 (Johnson) - From the preferred route at Jonquil Ave and East 260th Street head east along 260th (CH 2) through Elko New Market to Interstate 35. This alternative would utilize an existing county highway and may be a shorter and more direct route.

Sibley County

P-SIB-001 (Kahle) - From the preferred route at CH 13 head east cross-country 3 miles to CH 9. Head north on CH 9 to 310th Street and go east to 391st Avenue and continue east 0.5 miles, south 0.25 miles, then east 1 mile to 375th Lane and head south to 316th Street connecting with the preferred route. This alternative is similar to applicants route segment, and appears to potentially impact fewer homes.

P-SIB-002 (Multiple) - From the preferred route at 324th Street head south cross-country 0.75 miles to U.S. Highway 169. Go east on U.S. Highway 169 across the Minnesota River and rejoin the preferred just east of the river. This alternative seeks to utilize existing Minnesota River crossing (U.S. Highway 169).

P-SIB-003 (Hildebrandt) - From the preferred route head south along State Highway 22 turning east on 320th Street and following 320th to CH 13 connecting with the preferred route. This alternative may avoid bisecting agricultural land and appears to follow existing roads.

Yellow Medicine County

B-YEL-001 (Multiple) From the preferred route at 520th Street, take the alternative route north along State Highway 23. This route alternative appears to utilize State Highway 23 to connect the applicants' preferred route to their alternative route.

VII. REJECTED ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

Twelve of the alternative routes suggested by the ATPs (NW Alternative 1A, NW Alternative 1B, NW Alternative 3, SE Alternative 2, SE Alternative 3, SW Alternative 2, SW Alternative 5, I-90 to I-35, I-29 to I-94, I-90 to U.S. 52, I-90 to MN 56, and U.S. 14 to I-90, as delineated in the ATF reports) and 33 of the alternative routes suggested through public comment will be described in the FIS, but will not be considered for further study or evaluation in the FIS. The route segments were rejected as they either did not meet the stated need of the project as defined in the Certificate of Need (CapX 345 kV Transmission Projects, Docket No. ET-2, E-002, et al./CN-06-1115), had more impacts relative to the criteria used by the Commission in route permit determinations as defined in Minnesota Statute 216E.03, subd. 7., or were incomplete in their description and/or depiction.

The following seven rejected routes are not described in the list below and were rejected because they specifically did not meet the stated need of the project as defined in the Certificate of Need (CapX 345 kV Transmission Projects, Docket No. ET-2, E-002, et al./CN-06-1115): SE Alternative 2, SE Alternative 3, I-90 to I-35, I-29 to I-94, I-90 to U.S. 52, I-90 to MN 56, and U.S. 14 to I-90.

Brown County

P-BRN-006 (Prahl) From the preferred route head south from Terrance Avenue to 260th Street and go west along 260th to 320th Avenue proceed north following along 320th and terminates. This was an incomplete route alternative.

Dakota County

P-DAK-001 (Multiple) Connect with preferred route at Pillsbury Avenue and 245th Street East and head east along 245th for approximately 0.3 miles before turning southeast and cross-country one-tenth mile then east 0.5 miles and northeast approximately 0.75 miles then turning east-northeast along the east side of Dodd Boulevard connecting with the preferred route at 240th Street West. This alternative heads cross-country bisecting properties in a diagonal fashion. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

P-DAK-003 (Braun) – From north of 240th Street at preferred route head east cross-country to Audrey Street and terminate. This alternative heads cross country bisecting properties in a diagonal fashion and would impact a large wetland complex. This was an incomplete route alternative.

P-DAK-008 (Braun) – Approximately 0.9 miles north of 240th Street West, head east cross-country and along 307th Street West from the preferred route for approximately 1.8 miles to Biscayne Avenue West and follow Biscayne north to 230th Street West connecting with the preferred route. This alternative would run cross-country not following section or property lines bisecting properties and would also run through a fairly large wooded area. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

A-DAK-001 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATF [NW Alt 1A]) – From Interstate 35 head east cross-country to CR 90 (307th Street). Continue east on 307th Street to an existing 69 kV line and follow line northeast connecting with alternate route near Danbury Avenue. This alternative would run cross-country not following section or property lines bisecting properties. The alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

B-DAK-001 (Mertens) – From 220th Street East approximately 0.6 miles east of Collier Court head south cross-country approximately 5.5 miles then east 3.5 miles to Fischer Avenue, follow Fischer north to U.S. Highway 52. From U.S. Highway 52 head north cross-country approximately 4 miles to termination. This alternative does not meet the stated need of the project as defined in the Certificate of Need.

Le Sueur County

P-LES-001 (ATF – Henderson [SW Alt 5]) – From preferred route east of 320th Street follow State Highway 28 northeast to CR 155 and take CR 155 southeast to 320th Street connecting with the preferred route. No reason provided as to why this alternative should be included in scope. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

B-LES-010 (Malecha) – From preferred route, continue east along CH 28 (320th Street) to CH 31 and turn south continuing cross-country to State Highway 99. Proceed east on State Highway 99 to CR 137 and follow CR 137 north to CH 28, connecting with the alternative route. This alternative adds considerable length to project, impacts more homes, and impacts more wetlands than the segment that it is attempting to replace.

Lyon County

P-LYN-002 (Markell) – From 340th Street follow 190th Avenue north turning east and following 350th Street to 220th Avenue. Continue east cross-country approximately 1.5 miles re-connecting with 350th Street and continuing to 265th Street. The route continues east cross-country for another 0.5 miles re-connecting with 350th Street finally connecting to the preferred route. This alternative would negatively impact windbreaks/tree groves, would impact just as many homes, and would span a large wetland complex. This alternative has more negative impacts than the route segment it is intended to replace.

P-LYN-003 (Engels) – Just northwest of 340th Street head southeast along State Highway 68 turning south at 190th Avenue following 190th to 310th Street. Follow 310th Street east with a couple of 0.5 miles sections of cross-country to 280th Avenue connecting to the preferred route. No reason provided as to why this alternative should be included in scope. This alternative would run cross-country not following section or property lines and bisecting properties, includes more cross-country routing, impacts windbreaks/tree groves, and more impacts to homes. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

P-LYN-004 (Markell) – From preferred route at 340th Street head north on 180th Avenue and east along 350th Street terminating at CH 23. This alternative would run through a large wetland complex and is incomplete in its description and depiction.

P-LYN-005 (Markell) - From approximately 0.2 miles west of State Highway 68 proceed south cross-country approximately 0.9 miles to 170th Avenue and south to 320th Street. Proceed east along 320th Street crossing State Highway 68 and heading 0.5 miles through the north portion of the city of Ghent to 280th Avenue connecting with the preferred route. A slight variation of P-LYN-002.

P-LYN-006 (Grandview Township) - From 330th Street follow Lyon Lincoln County Road south following an existing 69 kV line. At approximately 1.5 miles proceed east approximately 5 miles cross-country to 160th Avenue and head south to 300th Street and head east on 300th finally connecting with the preferred route at 280th Avenue. This alternative would run cross-country not following section or property lines bisecting properties. The alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

Nicollet County

P-NCL-001 (Multiple) – From preferred route continue east from 340th Street heading cross-country through Minnesota River Valley for approximately 4.25 miles connecting again at 340th Street and following the road east approximately 1.5 miles with numerous cross-country segments including crossing over Clear Lake finally meeting up with 571st Avenue and heading north connecting with preferred route. A large majority of this alternate route runs cross-country and bisects a number of properties and would cross over Clear Lake (a public water). The alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

Renville County

P-RVL-002 (Fors) - From 420th Street follow 630th Avenue east to 430th Street and continue east cross-country 2 miles connecting with 630th again and head east (1 mile cross-country between 465th Street and CH 4). At 520th Street turn north and follow to 300th Street and head east to 651st Avenue. Follow 651st south approximately 1 mile and head east cross-country for 1.75 miles to 310th Street, following 310th east to 611th Avenue where route again heads cross-country 4 miles connecting to the preferred route. This alternative adds more length of cross-country routing that would bisect single-owner agricultural land. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

Rice County

A-RIC-004 (Jones) - Connects to alternate route at Interstate 35 just south of 45th Street West and heads north cross-country approximately 3 miles to 270th East Street where it terminates. A large majority of this alternative route runs cross-country and bisects a number of properties. The alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace. The alternative was also incomplete in its description and depiction.

A-RIC-005 (Malz) From 141st Avenue head northeast cross-country to CH 6 (45th Street West). Follow CH 6 to the point where the road veers south (Kannebec Avenue) and continue east cross-country approximately 3 miles to CR 96 (Halstad Avenue) and follow Halstad south connecting to the alternative route. A large majority of the alternate route runs cross-country and bi-sects a number of properties. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

Scott County

P-SCT-004 (ATF – Henderson [NW Alt 3]) - From West 270th Street and Aberdeen Avenue head northeast cross-country approximately 1.1 mile to Delmar Avenue and proceed north along Delmar to West 260th Street connecting with the preferred route. This alternative heads cross-country bisecting properties in a diagonal fashion. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

P-SCT-005 (Nytes) At a point on West 270th Street approximately 0.3 miles west of Aberdeen head southeast cross-country 0.1 mile, east 0.25 miles, northeast 0.25 miles, then east 0.75 miles to Delmar Avenue. Head north along Delmar connecting with the preferred route at West 260th Street. A slight variation of P-SCT-004.

P-SCT-006 (Nytes) - At a point on West 270th Street approximately 0.3 miles west of Aberdeen head southeast cross-country 0.1 mile, east 0.25 miles, northeast 0.25 miles, then east 0.75 miles to West 270th Street. Follow 270th east to Naylor Avenue and go northeast cross country approximately 0.25 miles then head north approximately 0.9 miles to West 260th Street connecting with the preferred route. A slight variation of P-SCT-004 and P-SCT-005.

P-SCT-008 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATC [SW Alt 2]) - From CH 2 (East 260th Street) go north on Langford Avenue approximately 4 miles then go east on CH 8 (220th Street East) for approximately 10 miles. Continue east on CH 70 to Interstate 35 and continue south along Interstate 35 connecting with the preferred and alternative route. This alternative would impact many more homes/properties, add considerable length to route, cross or come very near many Minnesota Department of Natural Resources public waters. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

A-SCT-001 (Lake Marion to Hampton – ATC [NW Alt 1B]) - Follow existing 115 kV transmission line north from 57th Street West connecting with the proposed/alternative route just north of 245th Street East. This alternative route would have the lake Marion substation moved south. This alternative does not meet the stated need of the project as defined in the Certificate of Need.

B-SCT-001 (Multiple) – Approximately 0.3 miles north of West 263rd Avenue on Fabor Avenue from the alternate route head east cross-country 3 miles connecting with the preferred route at West 260th Street. A large majority of this alternate route runs cross-country and bisects a number of properties. This alternative has more impacts relative to the criteria considered by the Commission in route permit decisions than the route segment it is attempting to replace.

Yellow Medicine County

B-YEL-002 (West) - From the alternate route at 290th Avenue to State Highway 23 then north along Highway 23 to 200th Avenue. This was an incomplete route alternative.

VIII. ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVES

The EIS will evaluate a total of 26 alignment alternatives suggested in comments. These are alternatives that fell within the applicants' requested route widths and generally entail site specific concerns such as building on one side of the road or the other, avoiding tree groves, and avoiding recreational areas or environmentally sensitive areas.

IX. REQUIRED PERMITS AND APPROVALS

The EIS will include a list of permits that will be required for the project.

X. ISSUES OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE EIS

The following issues will not be considered or evaluated in the EIS:

1. Any route or substation alternatives not specifically identified in this scoping decision
2. Questions of need, including size, type, and timing; questions of alternative system configurations; or questions of voltage.
3. The no-build option regarding the high voltage transmission line.
4. The impacts of specific energy sources, such as carbon outputs from coal-generated facilities.
5. Policy issues surrounding whether utilities or local government should be liable for the cost to relocate utility poles when roadways are widened.
6. The manner in which land owners are paid for transmission rights of way easements, as that is outside the jurisdiction of Public Utilities Commission.

XI. SCHEDULE

Following is the anticipated schedule:

October 2009 – Draft EIS available.

October and November 2009 – Draft EIS public meetings.

January 2010 – Final EIS available.

Signed this 30 day of June, 2009

STATE OF MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
OFFICE OF ENERGY SECURITY



William Glahn, Director